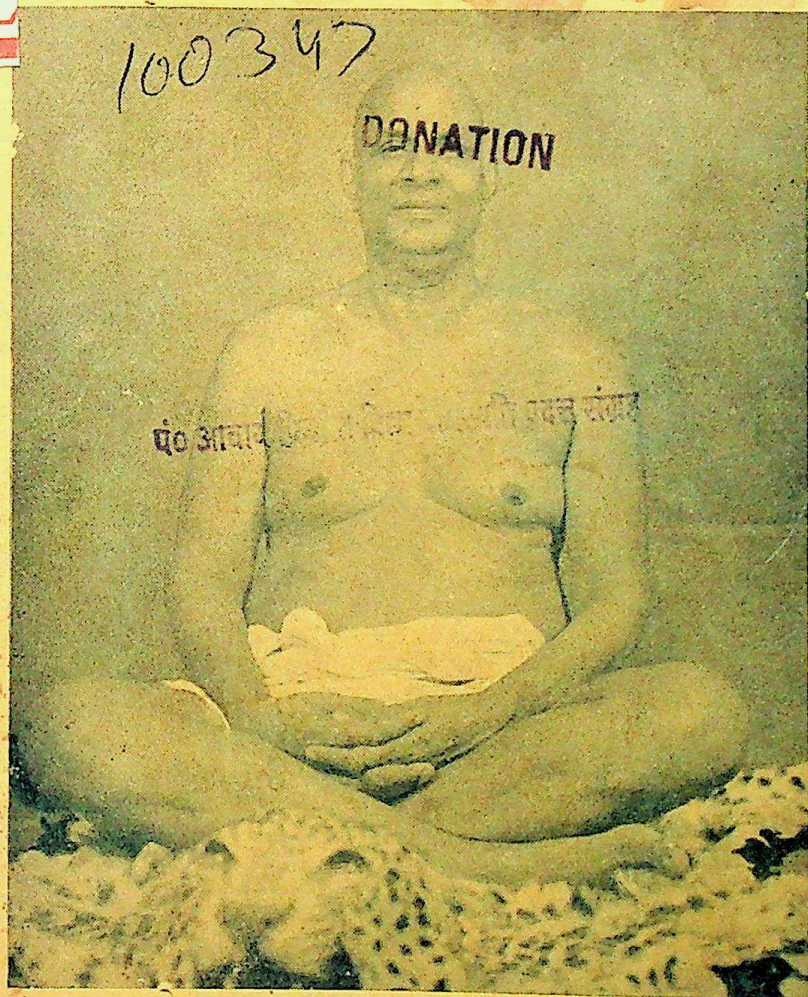
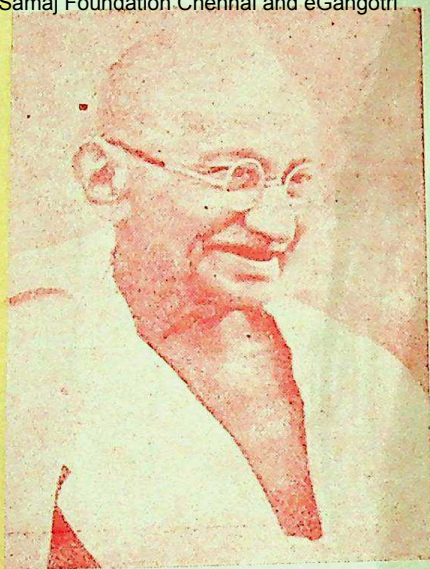


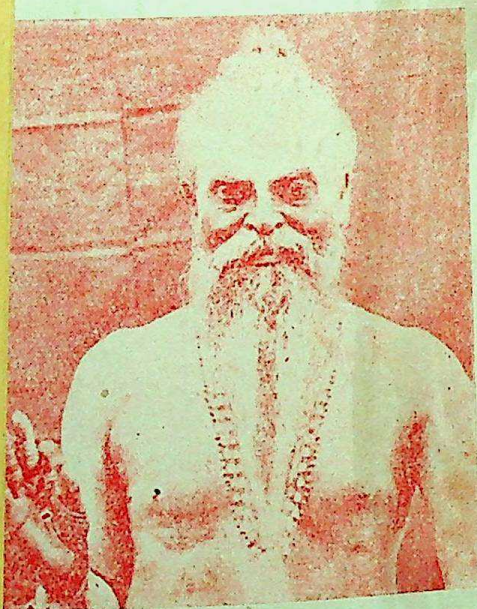
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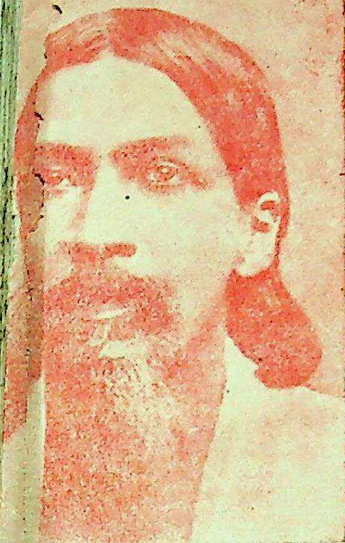


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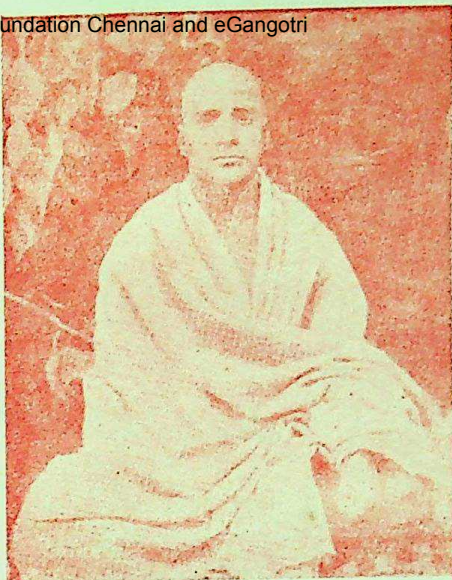


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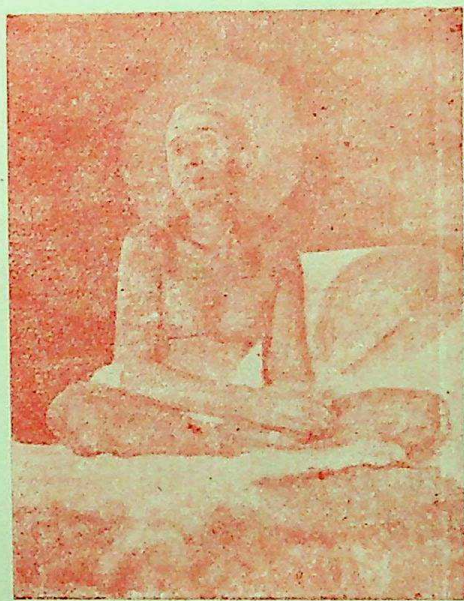
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Rama Tirtha



Sundara Swamikal



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ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

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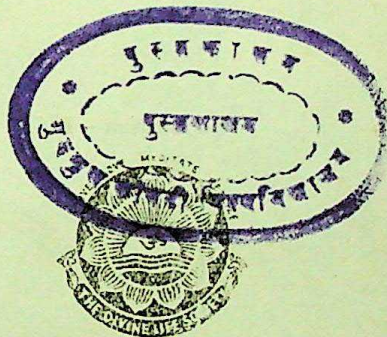
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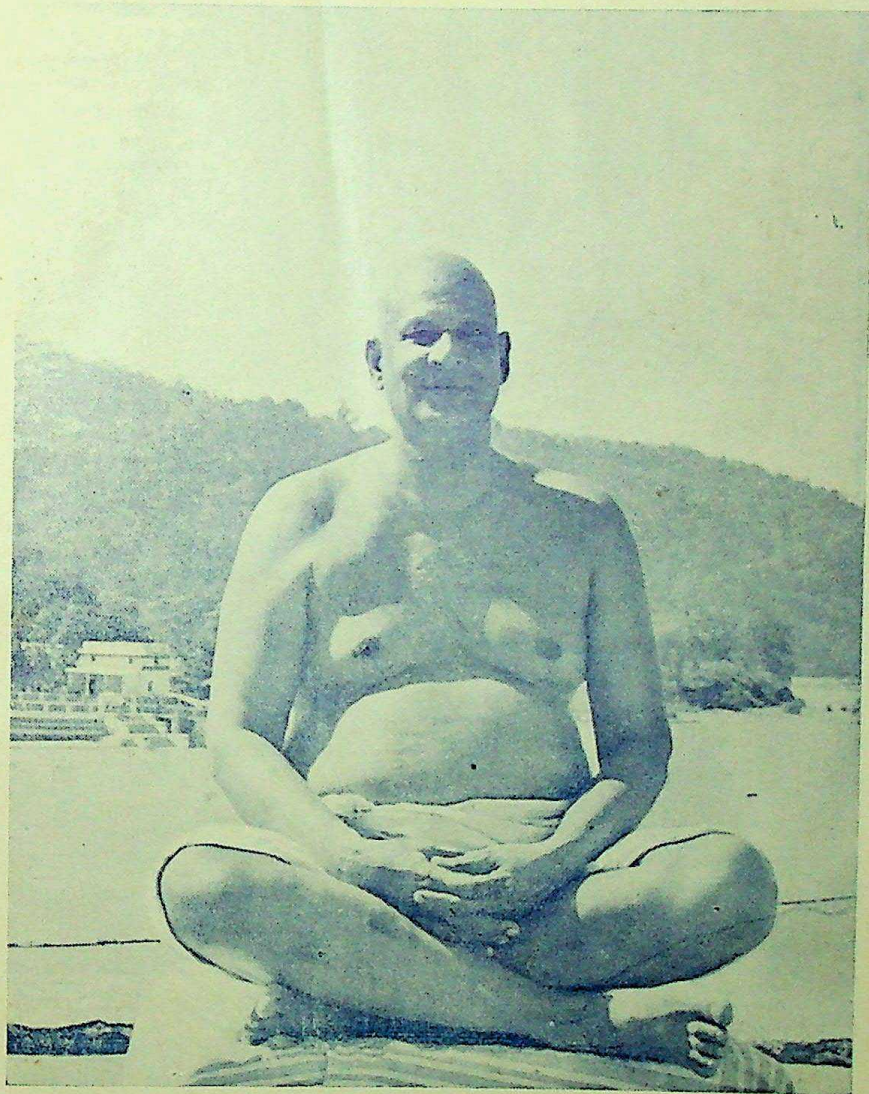
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Sri Swami Sivananda



Dedicated  
To Every Man,  
The saint of the future

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पं० आचार्य प्रियव्रत विद्या ऋतुसमी प्रवचन संग्रह



## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Nothing so profoundly influences a man's heart as the study of saints' lives. Their struggles lighten his burden, their achievements raise sublime hopes in him, and their virtues inspire him. They provide him a mould as it were for his own life.

The importance that Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj attaches to the aspirants' study of the lives of saints would be apparent if we bear in mind that every one of his earlier works had a separate section devoted to the lives of saints and that in more recent years two volumes of "Lives of Saints" have issued from his holy pen.

This volume is a significant addition to the "Lives of Saints" inasmuch as a good part of it is devoted to Sri Swamiji's own ancestors...from Sage Appayya Dikshita to Brahma-Sri Mahamahopadhyaya Raju Sastrigal.

We are grateful to Sri Y. Mahalinga Sastri for allowing us to publish his "Life of Brahma-Sri Raju Sastrigal"; no one else is better qualified to deal with the Great One's life.

We are also indebted to the authors of some of the other "lives" included in this volume.

The Chapter on "Modern Saints" would be read with special interest by everyone and reassure all that the age of sages has not and will never come to an end and that they, too, can and should strive to attain to sainthood.

Ananda Kutir.  
4th November, 1951.  
*Skanda Shashthi.*

}

**The Publishers.**

## SRI MIZAR GOVINDA PAI

Knowing fully well that Sri Mizar Govinda Pai always prefers to remain a *silent* benefactor, to "let the right hand not know what the left hand does", we take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude to him, of giving wordy shape to our heart's admiration of all that goes into the make-up of the sincere Sadhaka, ardent disciple, generous philanthropist, and magnanimous soul that he is; for, our love for him is overwhelming, and our eagerness to place this noble soul's example before the Man of today irrepressible.

Sri Govinda Pai's discipleship of Siva dates back to the earliest days of the Divine Life Society and his unstinting support has, in no small measure, contributed to the growth of the institution. But, what immortalised his gift to the Viswanath Mandir of the Ashram, of the exquisitely beautiful marble-Murti of Lord Sri Krishna, Who has, by His presence in the Temple, been silently proclaiming the glory of His Bhakta. Equally glorious has been his contribution to the Temple of Divine Life; his ceaseless efforts alone could have procured for us the lovely Italian white marble for Sri Gurudev's statue which is being given life and shape by Sri Nagappa of Madras, as I write these lines.

Sri Mizar Govinda Pai has given life to the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Press and made it possible for this long-felt need to be fulfilled and the dream of many a well-wisher of the institution to materialise.

May God bless him with health, long life, peace, prosperity and Kaivalya Moksha!

*Swami Venkatesananda*

---

For a pen-picture of Sri Pannalal, kindly see "Guide to God-realisation - by Sri Swami Sivananda".

## OUR PATRONS



**Sri Pannalal**



**Sri Mizar Govind Pai**

This is the first volume to be released by the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Press since its inauguration on the 20th September, 1951. We take this opportunity of expressing our deep indebtedness to Sri Pannalalji and Sri Mizar Govinda Paiji whose ready, willing, enthusiastic and whole-hearted patronage alone enabled the Press to be established as a full-fledged printing unit within so short a time.

*—The Publishers.*



## SWAMI SIVANANDA

### *A Brief Life Sketch*

*(Sri Narayanaswami Maharaj)*

His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananadaji Maharaj, the dynamic Yogi of the Himalayas, is the descendent of Sri Appayya Dikshitar the famous Jnani of South India and the reputed author of more than 100 original works in Sanskrit.

The parents of Kuppuswamy (as Swamiji was called in his poorvashram) were pious and noble. Kuppuswamy possessed a marvellous physique. He was a versatile genius. He was obedient and energetic. Even in his youth he was ever ready to serve, to share and to sacrifice, inborn traits which led him to the threshold of Atma-Jnana and thence to world renown.

It was this spirit of service that impelled him to adopt the medical profession as his own. He was always the most intelligent student in the class. In the second year of study of medicine, he possessed the knowledge of the student of the fifth year. He was freely admitted into the operation theatre and dissecting room in the very first year.

As soon as he completed his study of medicine, he began to publish the health journal "Ambrosia" which he himself edited. Several illuminating contributions on health and cure which appeared in the Journal were from his own pen. And he collected useful articles from other

medical men, too. During this period he also evinced keen interest in the conduct of Kathas and Sankirtans.

After two years of service to humanity as a medical journalist, Dr. Kuppuswamy went over to the Federated Malaya States as a doctor in the plantations. The foremost characteristics of his service were selflessness, intense love, magnanimity and charity. His fame as a loving doctor grew far and wide and earned for him a reputation that was equalled only by the greater opportunities of service it provided. Even here he had a great inner urge to share his knowledge with others, and he was a regular contributor to the medical columns of several journals and newspapers in Malaya.

In Malaya he came into contact with several Sanyasins and Yoga students. His shelves and almirahts were full of books on philosophy and a variety of other subjects in which he was interested. He was a voracious reader. After toiling the whole day in the service of the sick and suffering, he would study books till late at night. Whenever he studied religious books or came in contact with Yoga practitioners, he used to have a burning desire for renunciation.

Some invisible power has been responsible for the growth of the doctor. His profession and outlook on life so adjusted themselves as to suit the grand divine plan of the future. He was very pure in his character, sublime in his sentiments and emotions, deeply reflective in thought and wise in every act. He maintained

spotless purity. He led the ideal life of a Brahmachari. He looked upon women as mothers or Devis. Every afflicted soul was to him his own brother. Lord Narayana was peeping through the glittering eyes of an afflicted sufferer. This sublime mental attitude made him fit for the reception of the divinity and, on an auspicious day, he renounced the world and sailed for India.

He left the house abounding in wealth and prosperity, and voluntarily embraced poverty. He wandered from place to place. During his pilgrimage he visited all the places of religious importance. He sang the glories of the Lord and rendered assistance to all deserving men on his way. The spirit of service was ingrained in him and, even as a wanderer, he lost no opportunity of serving others.

The doctor reached Rishikesh at last and soon entered the Holy Order of Sanyasa in which Sri Swami Viswananda Ji Maharaj initiated him, under the Holy name Swami Sivananda Saraswati. The zeal and love for service that were innate in Sri Swamiji Maharaj prompted him to start a free dispensary (known as Satya Sevashram Dispensary) at Lakshmanjhula, the famous pilgrim centre where there was no hospital then. Then he took his abode in Swarg Ashram on the banks of the holy Ganges and engaged himself in intense Tapascharya and deep meditation. This was in 1924.

Even during the period of his Tapascharya, Sri Swami

Sivanandaji Maharaj continued to serve the Sadhus of Swarg Ashram and the poor sick patients of the neighbourhood. Apace grew the preparation for the grand future. He used to note down in small note-books his experience during meditation. Gradually devotees gathered around him, and for the benefit of Sadhaks, got these early writings printed in the form of pamphlets and booklets.

During the years 1930-1940 Sri Swamiji Maharaj toured frequently in the Punjab, the United Provinces, and Bihar. He presided over the Sankirtan Sammelans held at various centres and spread the glory of Lord's Name. He also went on a pilgrimage up to Rameswaram in the South, Kailas-Manasarovar, and Badri-Kedar in the North, and Gangasagar in the East.

Sri Swamiji's fame grew and with it the scope of his spiritual ministry to mankind. Leaving Swarga Ashram after his Sadhana, he started the Divine Life Society in 1936; with that the Sivananda Publication League came into being for publishing the writings of Sri Swamiji Maharaj. The League and four Journals (The Divine Life, the Wisdom Light, the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Weekly, and the Yoga-Vedanta Hindi Monthly Journal) help the spread of Sri Swamiji's message to mankind. The publication League has published over a hundred books of Sri Swamiji Maharaj. Sri Swamiji's Message of Divine Life has reached every country in the world.

The Divine Life Society also maintains an Ashram where wholetime Sadhakas reside, render selfless service unto humanity, practise the Yoga of Synthesis and strive to attain Self-realisation. The Society also puts out a constant stream of spiritual literature in the shape of leaflets and pamphlets for the guidance of millions of aspirants all over the world.

For the systematic training of Sadhakas in the theory and practice of Yoga and Vedanta, Sri Swami Sivanandaji established in 1948 the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University which holds regular classes in the various branches of Yoga-Vedanta. These classes are attended by the resident-sadhakas of the Ashram and the visitors to the Society's Headquarters, among whom several frequently are from foreign lands. The Yoga-Museum which contains a pictorial representation of the essentials of Yoga and Vedanta, and the Yoga Movie Films which depict the various Yogic Kriyas have earned wide appreciation from people coming from all over the world.

The unique feature of Sri Swamiji's writings is that they are couched in simple, lucid and direct style, easy of understanding and yet profound in their depth of thought. Swamiji's works have a universal appeal and are uniformly free from sectarian bias. They are eminently practical and suited to every man and woman in the world.

Millions in India had the greatest opportunity of their life of personally listening to Sri Swamiji's Message,

when he undertook an All-India Tour during the close of 1950. From hundreds of platforms in all the important towns and cities of India and in Colombo, too, Sri Swamiji broadcast his message of Divine Life, and re-installed in the heart of man an abiding faith in God and a love for His Name, and a firm determination to lead a life of righteousness.

Thousands of men and women in all walks of life have acknowledged that their self-transformation, and the consequent peace, happiness and prosperity, they owe to Sri Swami Sivanandaji's teachings.

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BOOK I

The Life Of  
Mahamahopadyaya Brahmasri  
**RAJU SASTRICAL**  
Of Mannargudi

By  
Sri Y. Mahalinga Sastri, M.A., B.L.  
Professor,  
Oriental Sanskrit College,  
Dharmapuram.



## THE GREAT ONE



Mahamahopadhyaya  
Brihmad-sri Raju Sastrigal



## P R E F A C E

The "Life" was written by my father in the form of a Sanskrit Champu, named *Tyagaraja Vijayam* and published soon after the passing away of the "great one". Some twenty years later I translated the life from Sanskrit into English with the help of Professor M.R. Rajagopala Ayyangar. A publisher could not easily be found for the translation and the manuscript after one or two fruitless peregrinations, went to the bottom of my shelves. Year before last, His Holiness the Jagad Guru Sri Sankaracharya Svamigal of the Kamakoti Pitha instructed me to give in Tamil a short survey of the "Life" for being included in a souvenir volume which commemorated the holding of the Adwaita Sabha sessions at Mannargudi in 1948—the place where the founder of the Sabha and the great teacher Brahmasri Raju Sastrigal lived and taught for more than half a century. In my Tamil version of the biography, I ventured to introduce some bits of new information of a more personal nature in order to bring the account nearer to the standards of abiography in the Western sense of the term.

Soon after this publication, the call came from Sri Swami Sivananda to me to write the "Life" in English. This gave me an opportunity to perfect the enrichment of the biography with more of the material which reveals the real personality of the subject from the inside. My grandmother who died at 88 years in 1943 was never tired of giving us her reminiscences of the good old days. Time and again she repeated with ever fresh fervour the same anecdotes,

sayings, and doings which revealed the greatness of her father-in-law, with emotion choking her throat and tears filling her eyes. These recollections were her recreation in leisure and solace in sadness; and they were her lessons too for the edification of the younger generation. I have compiled all her talks concerning the lives of her father and her father-in-law in a separate work written in simple Sanskrit prose. In this "Life" of the "great one" in English, I have drawn upon those recollections freely and attempted to make the account more humanly intimate than a mere record of external facts, however brilliant, could make it.

I had the benefit of a revision of this work again by Professor M.R. Rajagopala Ayyengar, a great friend of my father and my own teacher, whose suggestions for its improvement in style and matter have been of great help to me.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to Sri Swami Sivananda for the impetus he has given me to take up this work in the execution of which I have the satisfaction of having discharged a sacred duty towards my great ancestor. When I look back upon the development of this work from its first shape to its present form I feel that I have not waited in vain all these thirty years. It is a happy consummation of events that the English biography is now ushered into the world with the benediction of Sri Swami Sivananda through the publication department of Ananda Kutir.

Tiruvallangadu,  
6-1-1951.

Y. Mahalinga Sastri.

## CHAPTER I

### BIRTH AND EDUCATION :

उभौ तौ विश्रुतौ लोके स यथा शम्भुरीश्वरः ।

दीक्षिता अप्ययञ्चानः शास्त्रिणो राजुशास्त्रिणः ॥

“By ‘Iswara’ we understand *Siva* alone. Similarly ‘*Dikshita*’ connotes only Appayya Dikshita: and ‘*Sastrin*’ calls to mind none but Raju Sastrigal.”

Brihmasri Raju Sastrigal who flourished at Mannargudi (Tanjore Dt.) during the latter half of the 19th century A. D. and whose name has become hallowed by the unique saintliness of his character as well as by his profound and unparalleled scholarship, was the ninth in the line of direct descendants of Sri Appayya Dikshita and was born on the 28th of May 1815 A. D. (Yuva, Vaikhasi 17th Sunday). His immediate ancestors had lived at a village near Tiruvarur having acquired it by a grant at about the beginning of the 18th century A. D.; but the original home of the family was Adayapalam near Arani in the North Arcot District.

Brihmasri Raju Sastrigal learnt the *Sama Veda* with all its accessory lore under his grandfather and had his early education in the *Kavyas*, *Natakas* etc,

under his father. At fifteen years of age he could speak and compose beautifully in Sanskrit. For higher studies, Sastrigal went to Mannargudi, and on approaching his first Guru Sri Narayana Sarasvati he addressed mentally a prayer to his Kuladaivata as follows:-

मरकतवल्ली सहचरममरतरुं कमपि

सुलभमानमताम् ।

मार्गसहायामिख्यं कुलदैवत-

माश्रयामि सुरमुख्यम् ॥

“ I seek shelter under the foremost among the Gods who is my ancestral deity and who bears the name of Marga Sahaya, who is a kind of celestial tree ever accompanied by the Emerald creeper, Marakata Valli (His divine consort) and who is, strange to say, accessible to those who bow.”

At Mannargudi he stayed in his maternal uncle's house and sat at the feet of Sri Gopalacharya for some years till he attained great proficiency in Tarka and Vyakarana. Even during his studentship and while yet in teens, he proved more than a match for the veterans in learned disputations and emerged each time with flying colours and growing reputation.

He pursued his Vedantic studies first under Sri Narayana Saraswati and later under Sri Svayamprakasa Yati, his guru's guru. His other masters were Chinnanna Dikshitar of Mela Kaveri for Maha Bhashya (a kinsman of his own ) and Raghunatha Sastrigal of Kumbakonam for

Mimamsa. The latter thus spoke to Sri Raju Sastrigal who after a year's course regretted that he was obliged to leave for his home for domestic reasons:-

स्वयं द्रष्टुं शक्या भवति निखिन ग्रंथविततिः  
 मनीषानैर्मल्यान्मखिवरकृपातश्च भवताम् ।  
 गुरुःपाठश्चिन्तेत्यखिलमपि लोकानुकरणं  
 ततो गत्वा ग्रामं विरचयत विद्यावितरणम् ॥

"You can go through all the advanced works yourself by virtue of your beaming intellect and by the grace of your great ancestor. In your case teacher, lesson and revision have little significance except that you conform to ancient usage. Therefore go to your village and disseminate knowledge."

His other teachers too had expressed their highest regard for him. Sri Gopalacharya insisted on addressing his young pupil of 18 years with the honorific title of "Sastrin"; and Sri Narayana Sarasvati bade his sanyasi sishyas look upon their lay co-pupil as an *Avatara Visesh* and give up their unbecoming jealousy of him,

And, Chinnanna Dikshitar of Mela Kaveri was so well impressed with the extra-ordinary intellectual brilliance of his kinsman pupil that one day he asked the latter to take up at random a page of the Maha Bhashya far in advance of his lesson he was being taught and explain the passages. Sastrigal met with little difficulty in understanding the passages. After this test, the teacher who was very well advanced in years advised the pupil who was often called home by domestic circumstances, to content himself with what

he had so far studied assuring him that no further help was necessary for him from a teacher. It may be truly observed in his case as it was observed by Kalidasa in the case of Parvati as a pupil that all the learning he has acquired in a previous birth returned to him now at the proper age.

तां हंसमाला शरदीव गङ्गां  
महौषधीर्नक्तमिवात्मभासः ।  
स्थिरोपदेशादुपदेशकाले  
प्रपेदिरे प्राक्तन जन्मविद्याः ॥

“As the herd of swans returned to the Ganga regularly during Autumn, as to the medicinal herbs the light natural to them reappeared during night time, all the acquired learning of a past birth came back to her whose grasp of the lessons taught was firm.”

## CHAPTER II

## AS A TEACHER AT MANNARGUDI.

By the time Brihmasri Raju Sastrigal was twentyfour years old he was well versed in all the sastras and taking his residence as a *Grihastha* at Mannargudi in a house secured for him by the leading citizens of the place, he devoted himself whole-heartedly to the dissemination of knowledge to disciples and to the perfection of his own spiritual life through a strict observance to the ideals set forth by the Risis of old. Brahmasri Sastrigal carried into a very late age the exemplification of a sanctified life of internal and external purity dedicated to the goal of Self-realization. Every act of his derived its sanction from the sacred scriptures and aimed at self-purification. With him learning was a pursuit for its own sake; life was a discipline for higher evolution; and propagation of knowledge through teaching, disquisitions and writings, was an inviolable trust devolving upon him as an inheritor of an immemorial tradition which had passed on the torch from generation to generation.

Just after the completion of his sastraic studies under his teachers he devoted all his spare hours to a deep and reverent study by himself of the Manu and

Yajnavalkya Smritis, of the Smriti treatises like Parasara, Madhaviya and Vaidyanatha Dikshitiya and of the works of Srimad Appayya Dikshita on the several branches of sastraic learning and the works of Sri Vedanta Desika, Tatwa Mukta Kalpa and others. Nor were his studies confined to religious and philosophic works. The Ramayana, the Maha Bharata and the Bhagavata and the Suta Samhita claimed his very early attention besides some other leading Puranas. He also took an interest in astrological works like the Brihadjataka and Kalamrita and works on poetics like Kavya Prakasa and Kavya Darpana.

We may here briefly sketch his daily routine as illustrating the true Brahmanical ideal.

He rose from his bed at about three o'clock in the morning and went to the tank for his bath accompanied by his sishtyas. After finishing his prayers and meditations he returned home just before day dawned. While he passed through the street with sacred prayers on his lips and a water jar in his hand, the residents of the houses who happened to be sleeping at the front verandahs rose from their beds in hurry, and skulked away into the houses out of regard for him.

On reaching home he performed his daily worship of fire and then followed a programme of prayers, recitations and japa which lasted for about two hours. He was specially devoted to meditation on Sri Dakshina-murti and to japa of Sri Santana Gopala Mantra which his guru Sri Narayanananda Sarasvati had imparted to

him. By about 8 o' clock the sishyas assembled for the study of Vedanta and the lessons went on till about eleven o' clock. Then followed Madhyanhika Sivapuja and Vaisvadeva. At his meals he had guests everyday, in addition to the sishyas who lived with him. After some rest in the afternoon he conducted classes in Tarka, Vyakarana, Mimamsa and Alamkara to sets of students in succession. Usually, people were waiting outside everyday for the close of the lessons for referring their doubts to him on Dharma Sastra or other subjects of personal interest. When these interviews were over, he started for the tank at about sunset with a batch of sishyas for sandhya worship. After the evening prayers he visited the temple of Sri Minakshi Sundareswara nearby. On his return home he performed aupasana. Many were the stotras, mantras and hymns which he recited during the various hours of the day, but we desist from entering into details here. Evening Vaisvadeva preceded supper which consisted of a very simple meal. After some more prayers he composed himself to sleep. The style and the palm leaves were always ready for use by his bedside; and whenever any new thought or solution connected with Sastraic problems came into his mind at night he would atonce inscribe it by the moonlight.

His afternoon programme included whenever there was an interval, a reading of the Maha Bharata by a pupil of his named Appaswami Sastri who was specially qualified for the taste as he had a musical voice and also a good knowledge of the Karnatic melodies.

Later on, after his performance of the Soma Yaga his daily programme included Agnihotra and the rites appertaining to the duties of a Sacrificer. For not less than sixty years Sastrigal stuck to this routine unvaried transgressing neither the allotted time nor the scriptural rules and regulations.

Pupils gathered to him from far and wide. It is no exaggeration to say that he became to many an object of pilgrimage in his later years. People looked upon him as a Vasishta or Vamadeva vouchsafed by God's mercy for averting the menace of the advancing tide of KaliYuga and for providing a beaconlight for their standing steadfast by the noblest ideals of life. Those who were fortunate enough to have known him at close quarters could not but compare him with the portraiture of Kanva Rishi given to us by Kalidasa.

## CHAPTER III

## FATHER AND SON

Margasahaya (Appa) Dikshitar, Sastrigal's father, was a poet and a diarist, and it may not be out of place here to quote from his diary two verses of different dates in which he refers to his son.

आद्यः शान्तगुणः सदा जपपरो वेदान्तसारार्थवित्  
संयक् शास्त्रं चतुष्टयेऽप्यविरतं कर्मन्दिविद्यार्थिनाम् ।  
नित्यं पाठयिता सदा परशिवध्यानार्चनासक्तधीः  
रुद्राक्षावलिभस्मभूषिततनुः पित्रादिहृन्मोदकृत् ॥

यस्यात्मजोऽकृतकवाक्यशिरोविचार-

सञ्जातमोदचरितो ममताविहीनः ।

तत्तुल्यभागरसिकः पुरुषोत्तमोऽपि

नेत्येव मन्मतिरतः सुसुखः सदाऽहम् ॥

"My eldest son is serene by nature. He is at all times devoted to meditation. He is well acquainted with the core of the Vedantic teachings. Everyday he teaches uninterruptently all the four sastras to pupils who are sanyasins and others. His mind always turns eagerly towards the worship and contemplation of Siva. He shines adorned with Rudraksha and Vibhuti. He is a source of immense happiness to his parents and others."

"I am always exceedingly happy, for I am of opinion that even the lord Purushottama has not tasted the good fortune of one whose son is filled with the blissful joy born of a deep study of the Upanishads and is free from all traces of egotism."

Sastrigal's father lived in the village of Kuttambadi supporting a large family with slender means. He owned six velis of land which were saddled with heavy land tax payable in cash, while paddy sold at a contemptibly low price. His poetic effusions in diary form relate to a large extent to the oppressive land tax, the scarcity of money and the drought, floods and tempests which completed the agriculturists' ruin. Appa Dikshitar wrote to his son a letter of appeal hinting at his financial distresses. On seeing the letter Sastrigal regretted that he had no thought till then of the heavy burden which his father had been bearing and had done little to discharge his duty as a son to give relief to his father. He immediately consulted his guru Sri Narayana Sarasvati, on a proposal that he might visit the Travancore Maharaja's court for a recognition of his scholarship and a fitting award of honours. But Swamigal dissuaded him from thinking of going to so distant a place and suggested Pudukkottah instead. In fact, Swamigal said that the Raja was known to him and that he had already arranged through a friend for an invitaion to be extended that year to Sastrigal in connection with the Sabha used to be held during the Navaratri Celebrations. Sri Gopalacharya also was of the same opinion, and Sastrigal accordingly accepted the invitation from Pudukkottah, which arrived at the proper time. Sastrigal soon after wrote to his father that he would be visiting Pudukkottah that year in pursuance of the advice of his revered guru.

Some years later, during an unprecedented drought, Sastrigal's father was at his wit's end for finding the means of paying the land tax to the Sircar. He wrote to his son at Mannargudi for help. Sastrigal informed a rich land-lord of the place named Kunniyur Nanu Aiyer of the plight in which his father was. Mr. Nanu Aiyer was the most prominent among the citizens of the place who held Sastrigal in very high esteem and who were ready at all times to be of service to him. It is said that in those days of money scarcity Mr. Nanu Aiyer had to pledge his ear-rings to raise a loan of two hundred rupees for helping Sastrigal. This timely help saved the family lands from liability to attachment by the Sircar for arrears of land tax. To the end of his life, Sastrigal used to mention with gratitude this generosity on the part of Mr. Nanu Aiyer, and a tie of love and esteem between the two families lasted for long.

The well-to do residents of Agraharam were all men of faith and dignity. The swelling numbers of students who flocked to Brahmasri Sastrigal from all parts of the land were much obliged to the Agraharam house-holders for their hospitality. For more than half a century, Mannargudi Agraharam flourished as a kind of residential university, where education, boarding and lodging were all free. The co-operation of the wealthy in this respect was unique. So great was their reverence to Sastrigal and so high their sense of the importance of the cause to which he had dedicated his life that it was with pleasure they entertained the sishyas as boarders in their hospitable homes. Most of them modelled the Achara of their private lives on the great example before them and several even joined the groups of sishyas to entitle them to the proud memory of having sat at the feet of the illustrious teacher.

## CHAPTER IV

### TRIUMPHS AS A DISPUTANT

There was scarcely a contemporary scholar of reputation in South India who did not come into contact with Brahmasri Raju Sastrigal in disputations held under some auspices or other. Now it was the Sadha at Pudukkottah during the Navarathri festival, now at the temple of Sri Rajagopala Swami during the annual festival; at another time it was in the presence of the head of a Mutt, Madhwa or Vaishnava; not infrequently the occasion was a marriage celebration in the house of a rich landlord. Those were days of heroism in intellectual battles, and the arranging of meetings to afford opportunities for learned men to display their powers of argumentation in a spirit of keen rivalry among themselves was an enlightened kind of diversion which had a great attraction for the elite of the public. They would sacrifice anything for the gladiatorial spectacle, even as modern crowds do for enjoying a cricket match in which players of international fame take part. It is unnecessary to detail how on all such occasions Brahmasri Raju Sastrigal easily towered above the tallest of the specialists in the various particular

branches of Sastraic knowledge. Suffice it to say that eminent debaters who began first as opponents made their reverent obeisance to him at the end, ungrudgingly expressing their admiration of his profound mastery over the abstruse topics, his unfailing resourcefulness, his surprising originality which threw into shade even the writers of the polemical classics themselves, and, above all, his marvellous and majestic eloquence.

Sri Krishnananda Yati thus complimented him once after hearing his discourse:

अन्यादृशीयमपदोषपदप्रयुक्ति-

रन्वादृशोऽयममितप्रतिभाविशेषः ।

अन्यादृगेष विनयादिगुणप्रकर्षो

मन्ये न कश्चन बुधः सदृशोऽस्त्यमीषाम् ॥

“Inimitable is the chasteness of his speech, unmatched is his ready-wittedness. In none else can we find his humility and other priceless virtues. He has no compeer, as far as I know, among the learned men of the day.”

Vyakarana Rangachary, once, in Pudukkottah Sadha, laid down his arms after making a spirited stand on his own forte of Vyakarana Sastra and declared with genuine admiration:—

सिंहोऽयमप्रतिभटः के वयं तत्पुरो मृगाः ।

गुणतः शास्त्रतो वापि मृग्यतामीदृशोऽपरः ॥

बाहुना सिन्धुतरणं जिहयाऽसि विषट्कम् ।

कुरुतेऽयमनोत्मज्ञो यस्त्वेतान् जेतुमिच्छति ॥

“He is a veritable lion against whom there is none to rise in opposition; and for what do we count who are but deer before him!”

“He who, without knowing his own limitations is ambitious of vanquishing this great man, attempts, as it were, to swim across the ocean and to chafe his tongue against the edge of a sword.”

Sastrigal distinguished himself in several such annual Navaratri meetings at Pudukkottah, and higher and higher he rose in the esteem of all—the Ruler, the officers of the state, the pick of the pandits and the lay public.

But courts are courts and they do not fail sooner or later to grate against the delicate susceptibilities of a person of high moral stature. An unfortunate incident occurred at Pudukkottah which pained Sastrigal's heart so much that he almost lost all enthusiasm for dialectic displays. During one of those years, an intrigue was hatched by the court pandits for humbling a venerable but highly conceited scholar named Sri Venkatarama Vajapeyar, and Brahmasri Sastrigal was made the unwitting tool for his discomfiture which was proclaimed by the interested parties with shouts of decision. Vajapeyar actually shed tears before the assembly. To the end of his days Sastrigal regretted the incident and shuddered at the part he had been made to play in it.

Once Sastrigal was invited by the Raja of Ramanad to visit his place. Great was the respect shown by the Raja to him; and his generosity, handsome as it was, was set off by an attitude of humility which made him avoid a spectacular display of it.

The same year Sastrigal visited Pudukkottah as usual; but it turned out to be his last visit to that place. The intriguing pandits there pointed out to the Raja that Sastrigal, having been attached to the court for some years, should have taken the Raja's permission to visit another court and that, having neglected to do so, he had transgressed propriety. It was even hinted that the Ramnad Raja, having shown greater liberality, had risen higher in the esteem of Sastrigal. The Raja succumbed to the insinuations of the pandits and gave precedence, in that year, to a Madhwa scholar in the order of honour during the day of awarding the honorariums. Sastrigal usually insisted on precedence being given to his guru Sri Gopalacharya and willingly placed himself second in the order. In that particular year even his guru was superseded.

On leaving Pudukkottah, Sastrigal left a note for the Diwan in the hands of a trusted messenger. It ran as follows:—

गोपतिः सूर्या कलनात् सकलकलावृद्धिमेत्य सद्राजः ।  
मनुते तस्य तु बहुमतिमग्रे नाङ्गारकमुखानाम् ॥

The verse carries a double meaning; but the gist is like this:— “The moon owes all its brightness to the rays of the sun and so willingly concedes priority to the sun; but it will not brook the place of honour being accorded to Mars and the other planets.” The names of the three parties concerned are implied in the double entendie (Slesha).

With this Sastrigal bade farewell to Court patronage for ever.

## CHAPTER V

## SISHYAS, CLASSES AND TEACHING

The growing reputation of Brihmasri Sastrigal attracted to him students from far and near and in increasing numbers. Sishyas, young and grown up, brahmacharins, grihasthas and sanyasins, belonging to the distant Andhra or the distant Malabar and Maharasthra made pilgrimages to Mannargudi in quest of knowledge. Some of them resided with the guru. Many subsisted on the hospitality of the Agraharam mirasdars who not only took in boarders but also maintained others who had set up their families during their period of stay at Mannargudi for undergoing the Sastraic courses. For the sanyasins, the Mutt on the bank of the Gopinatha tank, with the Pamani river running quite close to it and the two temples of Siva and Vishnu rearing their majestic forms within easy distance; made an ideal place of residence, and they could always rely upon the populous Brahmin street within a few furlongs of the Mutt for their Bhiksha as then almost every householder was both well-to-do and generously disposed towards votaries of orthodox learning. When his pupils were sanyasins, Sastrigal would each day, before he began the lessons,

prostrate himself before them as became a grihastha in respect of Sanyasins. The sanyasi sishyas, some of whom were very young, writhed at heart with embarrassment when the elderly and revered savant bent before their feet ceremoniously, but could not protest as the law was inexorable.

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To his lay pupils Sastrigal was loving and affectionate like a father. But such was the splendour of his spiritual personality that the pupils held him in awe and reverence as if they were before a divine presence.

During the lessons the strictest discipline was maintained; none dared to giggle, yawn or whisper or look aside or betray the slightest indication of inattention or laxity of the limbs. With absolute steadiness and self-control, the pupils fixed their attention on the the ambrosial stream of words flowing from the guru's mouth, being all eagerness to devour every drop. A reader was chosen for every set on the merits of voice, intonation, alertness and intelligent grasp. The others followed the manuscript in hand. The teacher explained at each pause and he needed not the aid of a copy of the text. He arrested the reader when the latter stumbled over corrupt readings which often crept into manuscripts by the scribe's fault. His explanations were first brief and then elaborated with the wealth of the interpretation of the commenators. Historical, critical, comparative and biographical prefaces and edifying anectodes from the lives of scholars and teachers enlivened the lectures, whenever they were appropriate to the contexts. The most abstruse textual passages were rendered wonderfully lucid. The teacher could

read from the face of the pupils at a glance which of them lingered behind and had to be pulled up. The pupils were often tested by being made to recapitulate the previous day's lesson. Any forward pupil who betrayed his intelligent grasp of the explanations with manifest signs of approbation was reprimanded for his want of decorum. Cleanness, purity and refinement of a very high standard in dress, habits and behaviour were expected, and every individual took care that he was up to the mark. Pupils who were known to have a taste for idle gossip or to have spoken irreverent words due to arrogance, were strictly eliminated as likely to corrupt the other scholars. The Sanskrit biographer of Brahmasri Sastrigal, Sastrigal's own grandson, and the very last of the line of his sishyas writes that lessons in Brahmanandiya were made by the great teacher as delectable as the enjoyment of a classical poem.

A group of sishyas always used to revise by the lamp light their lessons after supper sitting on the spacious portico of the guru's house. Before going to bed Sastrigal would sometimes sit unobserved in the corridor behind the front door and listen to their revision. This enabled him to discover where they were weak and the next morning he would question them as if he did so casually and solve their difficulties. Sometimes the pupils themselves brought their doubts and difficulties to him for solution. He never lost his temper even when the doubts and difficulties were of a petty or silly nature, but patiently and with sympathy cleared them in a way which quickened the apprehension of the mediocre inquirer. Though he had a large number of students studying advanced philosophical treatises, he never considered it beneath his dignity to spend an hour with

beginners teaching them Kavya or Nataka, He usually took with him some of his best sishyas whenever he responded to invitations pressingly made to him and never failed to afford opportunities for them to display their scholarship and abilities in discussions in the assemblies of pandits. Sometimes, he would help his pupils in their lives, if he could, by recommending them to the patronage of the munificent wealthy, though often the mere mention of his name as their guru ensured to them honourable reception everywhere.

Among his numerous sishyas there was not one who did not look back upon the days he spent with him with feelings of the greatest pride and pleasure. They thanked providence that they had been given the privilege of coming into contact with a guru whose intellectual brilliance was unique and who was at the same time a lofty spiritual personality. The memory was an inspiration and a guidance to them in whatever circumstances they were placed in their later lives. The elevating influence of the great personality chastensd and ennobled their lives in a subtle manner. Many of the sishyas attained great distinction in their lives and held the torch of learning to the succeeding generation, from Benares to Rameswaram. But none of them, distinguished or obscure, ever missed an occasion to revive the memories of the blessed contact and thrill his hearers expatiating upon the greatness of the guru and shedding tears of joy in the spiritual exhilaration of the moment.

Brihmasri Sastrigal often insisted on the pupils acquiring character and adduced stories from the Puranas by way of illustration. He used to say:—

(1) "Reverence for the teacher, freedom from covetousness, shedding off laziness and eagerness to learn—these four qualities are indispensable for the acquisition of knowledge."

(2) "One who has humility, who is pleasing in talk and yet sticks to truth, who helps others and who is indefatigable in his pursuit of knowledge, is sure to attain fame."

(3) "Purity, external and internal, adherence to the traditional course of conduct, an attitude of worship towards the great, self-possession in regard to women and timely and wholesome food, are conducive to longevity."

His observations on life for the edification of his pupils may be summed up as follows:—

(1) "Men pathetically blunder into precisely the wrong ways in their eager hunt for happiness and bring unhappiness unto themselves."

(2) "Vasana is a force which is irresistible."

(3) "The study of the sastras can only help the progress of the Jivatma who is equipped with favourable "tendencies" determined by the karma of previous births."

(4) "All religions can meet amicably on several essential points."

(5) The Advaitins cannot discard as wholly irrelevant to their system the philosophic postulates of Sri Ramanujacharya."

(6) "The affairs of the world wear a charm which is only superficial and which exists not for thinking mind."

(7) "A person who desires to win the prizes of life should set himself steadily to systematic work."

(8) "Everyone can obtain his goal through unintermittent effort."

From worldly wisdom, passing on to the means of attainment of higher bliss, he put into a nut-shell the ulterior message of all the sastras thus:—

आशापाशशतोनुबन्ध कलना दोषाविलं मानसं  
 निष्कामैरिह कर्मभिः सुविहितैः शुद्धिं परां विन्दति ।  
 ध्यानेन स्थिरतामुपैति तदनुश्रुत्यादिभिः साधनैः  
 शुद्धाद्वैत सुखाकृतिं परिणतिं पुष्पाति पुण्यात्मनाम्

"The mind which is sinful and unhappy, with hundreds of entanglements due to desires, can be freed and rendered pure through well-designed meritorious actions performed for their own sake without any motive of gain or reward. A purified mind can be steadied in contemplation and then, with the guidance of the vedantic teachings, one can attain the supreme bliss of oneness with the universal Spirit."

## CHAPTER VI

## SISHYAS—THE PROMINENT ONES NOTICED

Of the sishyas of Brihmasri Sastrigal the following were very prominent and they in course of time grew to be stars of the first magnitude themselves, radiating sastric knowledge and spiritual influence. Mahamahopadhyaya *Harihara Sastrigal*, Mahamahopadhyaya *Ganapati Sastrigal* and Mahamahopadhyaya *Yajna Swami Sastrigal* were all in their turn great teachers. All these three were connected with the Adwaita Sadha, Kumbhakonam, and reigned supreme, as it were, in the realm of sastraic scholarship. The two younger had poetic gifts of a high order and won wide renown as eloquent speakers and eminent expositors. Brihmasri Yajna Swami Sastrigal wrote in the form of a Champu, a Sanskrit biography of his grandfather and guru; Brihmasri Ganapati Sastrigal wrote the *Guru Raja-Saptah*, an eloquent poem on his guru, instinct with fervent devotion.

Nadukkaveri *Srinivasa Sastrigal* was a unique personality. He was an orator, linguist, poet and journalist. He lectured to the lay audience in many languages, travelling from district to district, and strove

with his powerful eloquence and able penmanship to avert the gathering menace of the Christian missionary propaganda, which was calculated to undermine the vitality of the Hindu religion. He ran a Sanskrit-Tamil journal called *Brihma Vidya* and published in print many great books of the Saiva cult and of Advaita philosophy. He was an untiring worker and won distinction in the courts of princes of South India. He was also supported by the Mutts of Srīngagiri and Kanchi in his endeavour to educate the public. As an author, the poems and dissertations which he has left behind are numerous. He entered gurukula at a very early age, stayed there long and was a favourite of his master. The latter is said to have asked him once, "What, Srinivasa! is 'Lecture' in which you are reported to be often engaged?" The pupil replied with shyness "It is nothing but a discourse on moral and religious subjects for the benefit of the multitude." From Tungabhadra to Tambraparni his name was powerful like a spell, and it is said that the missionaries were afraid of him. He was simple, pious and saintly in his private life.

Palamaineri *Sundara Sastrigal*, another disciple, rose to high dignity in the court of Ramnad and Mysore as pandit. Sastrigal in a letter of introduction given to an applicant thus addressed him:—

राजस्थानविराजमानधिषणाकौशल्यनैर्मल्यभृत्  
कादाचित्कमदन्तिकस्थितिवशात्तदन्ते वसन् मामकाः ।  
इ न्याख्या पितमद्यशाः निपुणधीः सर्वेषु तन्त्रेष्वपि  
श्रीमान् सुन्दरविद्वदुत्तम इह क्षोव्यां विजेजीयते ॥  
आशा स्महे तस्य पुरोऽभिवृद्धिं यदाश्रयात् सर्वजनोपकारम् ।  
कर्तुं विशिष्य क्षमते स तेषां प्रभूत्तमानामपि मङ्गलानि ॥

"Sundara, the distinguished scholar, is reputed far and wide. His skill and intellect shed lustre on the courts of princes. He spreads my fame by calling himself my pupil for the reason that he for a time stayed with me. He is a master of all the sastras. We wish him more and more prosperity. May God send His choicest blessings to the ruler with whose help he (Sundara) is enabled to do good to hosts of people."

Among the other well-known disciples of Brihmasri Sastrigal mention may be made of Sri *Krishnamacharya* son of Sri Gopalacharya, who became the court Pandit at Pudukkotta; Tiruppati *Venkata Subrahmanya Sastrigal* who was a protige of the Raja of Venkatagiri; and Mallari *Rama Krishna Sastrigal* who was one of the leading Pandits in the Andhra districts. Palghat *Chandra-sekhara sastri* was a youth of a great promise, with admirable debating talents. His life was cut off at a very early age. He had an attack of small pox and died in the house of his guru under whose parental care he had been living.

Among the Sanyasi disciples *Mahadeva Asrami* of revered memory was well known for his profound learning and adherence to the strictest principles of his fourth state. *Brihmananda Swami* lived at Benares, dedicating himself to the cause of Advaita through his teaching and writing. One amongst his pupils was the late *Avadhuta Svyamprakasa Swamigal* of Sendamangalam.

Besides these, Parithyur *Krishna Sastrigal* of Ramayana fame, Muruthivakkudi *Sami Sastrigal* reputed for his proficiency in Dharma sastra and Triskandha Jyotsha and such others with special accomplishments in their chosen fields considered it a rare privilege to join the ranks of Sastrigal's pupils at least for a time.

A good number of Sanyasins and scores of Vaishnavas entered into the stream of sishyas from time to time. The Vaishnavites particularly of the abjacent village of Syenangulam assiduously attended the classes. The local people, especially of the Agraharam, vied with the incomers for a share of the liberal distribution of knowledge.

It was a perpetual vernal season, as it were, for learning, which flowered not only in the well-kept gardens but also in the wayside fences and out of the way shrubbery. Mannargudi was a famous seat of learning in South India for more than half a century and sent forth mighty scholars and men of character and faith to the distant parts of the land. The sun of knowledge so to say shone from that centre illuminating the endless landscape with his splendid rays.

## CHAPTER VII

## GROWING REPUTATION AND THE TITLE

Brihmasri Sastrigal in his later years become an object of pilgrimage for people of all classes and states in life. The reverence inspired by him was so deep that people never referred to him by his name. To them he was the "Great One". Not a day passed without visitors from far and near waiting for the evening hour of interviews, with plates full of fruits and sugar-candy. Sastrigal often said to himself on his being obliged to give such *Darsans*: "What have I done—except adhering to my *Swadharma* to the best of my ability—to deserve the homage of such a large number of visitors?"

He even regretted that he had done very little good work when he compared himself with his great ancestor Srimad Appayya Dikshitar. In his poem entitled "Sri Dikshita Nava Ratnamalika" he says:—

प्रबन्धशतनिर्मितिः प्रथितमग्नितहोत्रादिकं  
 श्रुतप्रवचनादयः श्रितजनावनाथ प्रभोः ।  
 सभां प्रति गतागतं समुदितं मखीन्द्रेषु नः  
 कियत्यलसता सतामपि ततः परेषां भुवि ॥

"The illustrious Dikshita wrote a hundred works, performed the sacrificial rites of a householder, gave expositions of the Sastras, frequented royal courts for ensuring protection to the aggrieved and did so many meritorious acts. We who are his lineal descendants, alas! drag on our existence on earth in sheer idleness in every respect."

In 1887 A.D. was celebrated the Silver Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign and the Government availed themselves of that occasion to revive the ancient Hindu usage of honouring distinguished service to the spread and advancement of Sastraic knowledge with the conferring of the title of Mahamahopādhyaya. Two eminent scholars were chosen for the honour one in the north and the other in the south. When the announcement was conveyed to Brihmasri Sastrigal, he muttered to himself as if much abashed, "The title used to adorn such great scholars as Mallinathasuri. How do I deserve it?" The matter was left there. None dared to ask the "Great One" to go to a Durbar to receive the insignia of the title ceremoniously. After several months of waiting the Collector of Tanjore sent the insignia and the title to the "Great One's" house and serenity of Sastrigal's usual routine was not in the least interrupted by any fuss over the matter.

Sastrigal was simple and pure by nature and the least self-conscious of all, as one who had dissolved all trace of egotism in the contemplation of the transcendent. He did his life's work neither for recognition nor for reward. Recognition and reward when they came found

him indifferent. With perfect equanimity and contentment he stuck to his duties or Dharma, and standing lofty and firm as the heaven-kissing peak, rose far above terrestrial ambitions. The howling wind and the beating rain passed on without disturbing his profound calm or obscuring the eternal sunshine over the head. None ever found him surprised or scoffing, hilarious or down-hearted, wrangling or waggish; like the sun and the moon he went on his course determined by the inexorable Dharma and his whole life was one of sublimation of the self through *Karma* and *Gnana*.

The pecuniary cares and responsibilities of a householder never bothered him. He never kept a cash box, nor carried a bunch of keys. He never counted money, nor concerned himself with accounts.

Serene and high as he was, he had a subtle sense of humour, and was always pleasant, dignified, gentle, kind and calm. His courtesy was remarkable. He referred to his younger son-in-law, whose indiscipline would have upset the practised self-control of any other person, always with the honorific plural added to his name and never let fall from his lips a word of reproach or regret. An unconventional urchin of the neighbourhood or a garrulous old dame of remote relationship could talk to him with easy familiarity. He was polite, kind and compassionate towards all. Family quarrels among his near relatives were sometimes brought to his presence. Deep impenetrable silence was his only answer, and the hot wranglers were wafted to coolness and soon returned wiser than before.

Once some rustics came to refer to him a difference of opinion among themselves regarding the colour of the flag to be raised in connection with *Manmatha's funeral* festival which according to ancient custom they celebrate annually. "Was the colour to be red or black" was the question. Sastrigal was at *Puja*. His pupils at the door engaged themselves in a conversation with the rustic enquirers for fun, and then dismissed them saying, "these are petty matters for troubling the Great One with." But Sastrigal came out after the *Puja* to enquire what was the noise about and being told what the matter was, disapproved of the pupil's disregard of the *Sraddhalus'* problem and quoting the *Sivarahasya* which enjoined the use of the red flag on such occasions bade the pupils seek out the disappointed *Sraddhalus* and give them the proper direction immediately.

## CHAPTER VIII

### AN AUTHORITY TO BE REFERRED TO

Specialists in the various arts and sciences sought with humble solicitude opportunities for exhibiting their skill in the "Great One's" presence. Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan, the greatest musician of his age and scarcely surpassed or even equalled by any of a later age for his almost celestial voice and skill and genius, made it a point to give a performance in the "Great One's" house whenever he came on a professional visit to Mannargudi and deemed such a dedication of his art as an expiation for his making it professional. On such occasions, he took up for exposition the life of a Saiva Saint and mingled it with music or rather toned up secular music with a devotional theme, considering such an adaptation of his art appropriate in the circumstances. His elder brother Ramasesham Siva, expert scholar and composer, assisted him in the discourses. The house was usually packed to the full during such performances and Sastrigal, having regard to the taste of the wider audience, used to recommend to the performers that more space might be given to music proper.

Once when Sastrigal was at *Tiruvalur* during the annual festival of Sri *Tyagaraja* the celebrated Bharatanatyam exponent, *Tiruvalur Gnanam* prayed for an audience. Sastrigal never denied audience to any one who sought it with pious and sincere solicitude. He was free from self-conceit which alone would make him hold himself proudly aloof. Gnanam's prayer was granted and she portrayed in gestures one or two verses from the *Krishna-Karnamrita*. Her performance was delightful and Sastrigal expressed his appreciation in appropriate words.

Brahmasri Sastrigal was often sought after as an arbitrator by many learned disputants. His judgments were delivered in writing in the more important cases. Sri Sundaresa Srowtigal of Tiruvayyar and Sri Krishna Josyer of Karungulam were protagonists of the opposite schools of *Drig Ganita* and *Vakya Ganita* respectively in the matter of the *Panchanga Ganita*. The discussions and the demonstrations went on for several days before Brahmasri Sastrigal. Brahmasri Sami Sastrigal of Marnttukudi, reputed for his mastery of Triskandha Jyotis Sastra, also attended on the request of Sastrigal. In his decision Sastrigal applauded the scientific accuracy of the reforming school of *Drig Ganita* and recommended it for astronomical and astrological purposes, but as far as the *Tithis* were to be determined for Vedic rites and ceremonies, he hesitated to make a departure from the time-honoured principles of ascertainment.

Varahoor Krishnaswami Srcutigal sought to overthrow the customary mode of chanting the Sama Veda and demonstrated a new method of singing it to the accompaniment of the harmonium. He was not

successful in securing the approbation of the "*Great One*", though he was given a patient hearing and was complimented on his skill in research and for his earnest endeavours to find out the pristine original methods of *Sama Gana*.

Problems in Dharmasastra and *Acharya* were very frequently referred to the "*Great One*" for opinion. In some very complicated cases Sastrigal consulted Brihmasri Sami Sastrigal of *Maruttukkudi* whose knowledge of the Dharmasastras was very profound.

Even judges and lawyers sometimes took expert advice from Sastrigal on points relating to Hindu law. Authors and Publishers considered it a great honour to have a few lines of commendation by the "*Great One*" to their books; and scores of *Abhinandana Patrikas* are known to have been given by Sastrigal to those who approached him.

A Mohomedan Collector of Mannargudi well versed in the books of his own religion, once desired to have an interview with Sastrigal. His wish was sanctioned, and Sastrigal questioned the Collector on the fundamentals of the latter's religion and in his concluding remarks emphasised the essential unity of all religions and the necessity for faith on the part of the individual in his own religion as a means to salvation.

It is said that some one questioned Professor Max Muller if it was not strange that he had not visited India of whose greatness in the past he had written so many volumes, and that the Western Savant replied, "If at all I wish to go to India, it would be for meeting Brihmasri Raju Sastrigal of Mannargudi."

Sastrigal had an objection at first to sitting for photographs but he overcame it at a late stage when people most solicitously sought his photographs. Several sittings were arranged on different occasions and the reprint adorned many homes of the admirers and sishyas and relations of the "*Great One*."

What was said of Sri Rama by Valmiki was true of Brihmasri Sastrigal during recent times, says the Sanskrit biographer,

“यथा त्रेता युगे रामो राम इत्यवदन् जनाः ।  
तथाऽस्मीषां गुणान् सर्वे गृणन्तिस्म कलौ जनाः ॥”

And we may add that the observation of Valmiki

“यश्च रामं न पश्येत्तु यं च रामो न पश्यति ।  
निन्दितः स भवेद्भोके स्वात्माऽप्येनं विगर्हति ॥”

could have been applied *Mutatis Mutandis* to the "*Great One*" during his life time.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE YAJNA, ADOPTION AND FATHER'S PASSING AWAY

Brihmasri Sastrigal considered it obligatory on him to perform a *Yajna* as he belonged to a line of great sacrificers, Dikshitas—and also as the Sastras left no room for doubt in the matter. But before he could think of it, he hurried to arrange the performance of a *Yajna* by his father who was nearly seventy in 1864 and had not till then discharged that sacred duty to the gods. Two years later Marga Sahaya (Appa) Dikshitar fell ill and seriously doubted his recovery. He called Brihmasri Sastrigal to his side and advised him to take his brother's third son Sri *Nilakantha* in adoption, for he said: "my obsequies should be performed by you as one with a son. Your horoscope indicates that you will not have an *aurasa* son." Brihmasri Sastrigal carried out

## THE YAJNA, ADOPTION AND FATHER'S PASSING AWAY 39

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the command of his father immediately. The adoption took place in 1866. A few months later in 1867 (February-March) the father passed away.

In 1874 (May-June) *Bhava—Vaikhasi*, Brihmasri Sastrigal performed the *Soma Yaga*. In view of the performance, he began his preparations some years earlier. First of all he made himself master of the Yajurveda which is predominantly the Veda used in sacrifices. He then looked into the literature dealing with sacrifices—the *Srauta* treatises. He also determined the chief functionaries and held several preliminary conferences with them and rehearsed the parts. Only after this thorough preparation did he enter into the actual performance of the *Soma Yaga*. Brihmasri Kuppuswami Sroutigal of Tiruvayyar took the leading part among the participators. Every one of them was reputed for his mastery of the literature and the rituals and had acquired vast experience in the discharge of their respective duties in a sacrifice.

A spacious shed was erected in front of the Sri Minakshi Sundareswara Temple near the Pamani river and the Gopinatha tank; and the function was largely attended by all the learned and the wealthy in the town and the neighbourhood. A surging concourse of people eager to have a look at the grand spectacle poured in every day. By this *Yajna* the days of the Rishis of old seemed to be renewed, the supremacy of the Vedas

appeared to have acquired a fresh confirmation. Sanctity and holiness pervaded the atmosphere and people's hearts throbbed with reverence, piety and faith. The deities of heaven invoked by the rilling Mantras and rites seemed to shower their graces with benignity over the world of mortals from their invisible posts.

In *Yuva*, the next year after the sacrifice Brihmasri Sastrigal's only grandson was born and he was named *Yajneswara* as he was the gift of the lord of *Yajna* for the continuation of the lineage. It was Brihmasri Sastrigal's year of birth in the sixty-year's cycle and the grandson was destined to continue the work so dear to him by carrying on the torch of ancient learning to yet another generation.

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## CHAPTER X

## DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

Brihmasri Sastriyal from the time of his performing the *Soma Yaga* regularly devoted himself to the consequential rites of *Pasu bondha*, *Ishti* and *Agnihotra*; and his wife *Sundari* of revered memory was an ideal *Patni* whose pure-hearted and thoroughly selfless service in the cause of the house-holder's Dharma sanctified what was already sacred. She attended with great assiduity and scrupulous care to the gathering and preparing of all materials necessary for the rites whether they concerned the routine or were of a special nature, from the chaff and the cow dung cakes and balls, to the ghee and the unbroken rice. She requested the guests to stay for the meal; in the case of persons leading a Vaidic life she would say "Kindly have your Vaisvadeva here"; and in the case of others she would say, "Be good enough to dine with us." She was of a genial disposition ever kind, sympathetic and loving, very active, economic, punctilious, pure, ingenuous, pious, simple and unassuming, and whole-heartedly devoted to the Dharma of a housewife.

Brihmasri Sastrigal's mother lived upto a very great age. For many years she lived and at the Kuttambadi family house with a widowed daughter of hers. At her instance Sastrigal conducted the kumbhabhishekam of the Agastyeswara Temple at Kuttambadi, a Temple which had been founded by his ancestor.

After the death of her daughter, the old lady came to Mannargudi and lived with her son. There she was attended to with great consideration and kindness for all her fastidious tastes and idiosyncracies due to old age. She lived till her great grandson grew up to be a boy of five or six years.

Of the two daughters of Brihmasri Sastrigal, the first was the wife of Sita Rama Sastrigal who was wealthy and learned, but died at an early age. His second son-in-law too belonged to a very well-to-do family, but early in his life he dissipated all his wealth.

To his adopted son, Brihmasri Sastrigal married the daughter of Brihmasri Sami Sastrigal of Maruttukkudi near Aduthurai. Sami Sastrigal was profoundly learned in Dharma Sastra and Jyotis Ganita. He was a man of exemplary character and was held in high regard by those who knew him. Sami Sastrigal's daughter Mangalambal was an ideal daughter-in-law. From a very early age she bore the whole burden of all the duties of the household and won the esteem and love of the elder members who made no secret of their appreciation of her invaluable services.

## CHAPTER XI

### WRITINGS

The writing which Brihmasri Rajusastrigal has left us are either highly philosophical and religious, or devotional. Among the philosophical works the *Sadvidya Vilasa* is a metrical work elucidating the sixth Adhyaya of the Cchandogya Upanishad, with a prose commentary.

*Vedanta Vada Samgraha*: is a prose work treating of the views of Advaitins of different sub-sections with arguments for and against *inter se*.

*Upadhi Vichara*: a logical treatise in verse dealing with the fallacy called *Sapadhika*.

*Brihma Vidya Tarangini Vyakhya*: an elaborate prose commentary on a treatise on Advaita philosophy written by his guru Sri Narayana Saraswati.

*Nyayendu Sekhara*: also called *Chandrika Prasada*: a refutation in prose of the argument advanced by the great logician Sri Ananta-arya in his *Nyaya Bhaskara* against the logical soundness of certain parts of the *Advaita Siddhi* and *Brahmanandiya*. This work constitutes the highest summit among the successive contributions to the Advaita polemics during the twelve or more centuries from Sankara up to date. A prize test on this memorable work is endowed for under the auspices of the Advaita Sabha, Kumbhakonam, as the highest criterion of a distinction which it has to confer on a scholar. *Sama Rudra Samhita Bkashya*: a commentary elucidating the meaning of the Rudra Samhita in Sama Veda.

*Siya Tatva Viveka Dipika*: an elaborate commentary on Sri Appayya Dikshita's work, specially devoted to defend the same against the attacks of a Vaishnavite writer upon it in a work called *Vedanta Kaustubha*.

*Siva Mahima Kalika Stuti Vajakhya*: a commentary on Sri Appayya Dikshita's work which utilizes the Mimamsa Nyayas for enhancing the value of a devotional lyric. Sastrigal presumes that Sri Appayya Dikshita himself should have written a commentary on his work, but as such a work has not come to light, he proceeds to supply the want having regard to the unique value of the poem. It goes without saying that none could have discharged the task so ably next to the great Dikshita himself.

*Purushartha Prabodha Samgraha*: As summary in verse of a long work called *Purushartha Prabodha* describing the ideal religious life.

*Durjanokti Nirusa*: Representation was made to Brahmasri Sastrigal one day by a pious Siva worshipper who learned with indignation at a blasphemous tract published by a contemporary pandit bringing to ridicule the wearing of Vibhuti and Rudraksha and degrading God Siva from His pre-eminence. Sastrigal asked one of his sishyas to read out the tract and immediately dictated his reply. Mr. A. Sāmbamurti Aiyer, Sastrigal's brother's son, who was then in the Madras Judicial Service, was present during the wonderful production of the treatise in defence of Bhasma and Rudraksha, as it were, in a trice without the aid of any book of reference even for the copious quotations contained in it from the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Agamas. This "Refutation of the Statement of a perverted person" betrays no ill will or anger. It rises above petty bickerings, is marked by serenity style and manner and deals with the adversary in a spirit of compassion and with magnanimity. It shows only the *Great one's* anxiety that falsehood and pernicious notions should not spread and corrupt the unwitting layman. It gently rebukes the reviler for breaking his ancestral traditions, as his ancestors were pious votaries of all that he now reviles at, and advises him to stick to his own preferences without blaspheming accreditedly sacred things. The Pundit wrote a rejoinder which was however taken up for demolition by Sri Ganapati Sastrigal and other pupils of the "*Great one*". Ganapati Sastrigal exposes the

opponent's perversities and weaknesses relentlessly and not hesitate to proclaim in a derisive tone how the opponent made infructuous all attempts to bring him face to face with the "Great one".

We shall next notice the stotra literature left by Brahmasri Sastrigal. Several of his Stotra poems have been collected in a volume entitled the *Tyagarajastava*. Tyagaraja Stava is the first of the series. It is a work of great poetical worth. It is accompanied by a commentary which not only explains the verses but discusses the Alamkaras and defines the metres occurring in the work. It is further enriched by quotations from Smritis and Puranas. The work is divided into four sections and the prelude deals with the author's ancestors and gurus.

Another poem in the series is the *Tambraparni Stuti*. It was written during a pilgrimage to Tinnevely which Brahmasri Sastrigal undertook on the invitation of Mr. A. Krishnaswami Aiyer, a prominent Vakil of the place. There are several poems under this head which have reference to the holy shrines of the Saivite centres in the vicinity of Tinnevely.

The collection includes *Kaveri Nava Ratnamalika* which was composed on the occasion of Sastrigal's visit to Manattattai near Trichinopoly on the invitation of a leading landlord of the place. There are other poems in the collection describing the annual festivals of Sri Tyagaraja at Tiruvaloor, of Sri Rajagopala Svami at Mannargudi.

His miscellaneous works include *Dikshita Vamsa bharana* in Prose and *Dikshita Navaratna Malika* in verse.

Of the several minor works of Sastrigal not noticed here the *Chatussloki Vyakhya* is of great value to us as furnishing the only direct and positive clue for ascertaining Sri Appayya Dikshita's dates of birth and death. It is a quotation from a lost biography of the Dikshita which runs as follows:

विक्रमे भूतलं प्राप्य विजये स्वर्गमाययुः ।

The date of Sri Appayya Dikshita which results from this dictum is 1520 to 1593 A.D. ♦

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♦ Vide Oriental Research Journal, Madras, Vol. II 1928 and Vol. III 1929, for a detailed discussion of the date.

## CHAPTER XII

### TRIPS AND TOURS

Brihmasri Sastrigal's brother Sri Appayya Dikshita lived with his second son Sri Mahatunga Ayyar at Madura. Mr. Mahatunga Ayyar was practising there as a Tamil Vakil and he prospered well in the profession. He induced his uncle to go over to Madura and stay with him for a month with all the members of the latter's family. This was about the year 1882 A.D. During Sastrigal's stay at Madura Mr. A. Krishnaswami Ayyar of Kailasapuram, a prominent Vakil of Tinnevely paid his respects to Sastrigal and invited him to Tinnevely. Sastrigal stayed at Tinnevely for more than a month as the guest of Mr. Krishnaswami Ayyar and visited all the sacred places in the vicinity.

During Brahmasri Sastrigal's visit to Manattattai, he gave a learned discourse on the greatness of God Narayana and his identity with god Siva, at the instance of a great scholar named Govardhana Rangacharya, before a distinguished audience. Thereafter Brahmasri Sastrigal was suggested in a lighter mood in a contest with an expert in riddles and puzzles. After solving all the

problems propounded by the expert to the latter's unbounded admiration, Sastrigal trapped the other with a riddle in the form of a verse composed *extempore* by him. The expert could not find the way to solve the quizzle. The stanza ran as follows.

समुद्रनवनीतेन धनञ्जयगावाहर ।  
आशुनः सुतरामेणशयानन्तनुतेहितम् ॥

The *Sandhis* are knotty and hide the true identity of the words and therein consists the puzzle. There are also words which by their obscurity add to the difficulty of interpretation. The meaning may be stated as follows: "O God! whose three eyes are the Moon, the Sun and the Fire, who holdest the deer in thine hand, and who art worshipped by Vishnu, grant us our desires fully and immediately."

Mahamahopadhyaya Professor S. Kuppusvami Sastrigal who was a pupil of one of the Sanyasi Sishyas of Brihmasri Sastrigal, had many interesting anecdotes regarding the life and sayings of the "great one", which he had gathered from his guru (the Palamarneri Svamigal). One such anecdote had reference to Brihmasri Sastrigal's visit to Konerirajapuram. The place being infested with mosquitoes provoked Sastrigal to leave a poem behind him in memory of the sleepless night he spent there and as a reply to the insistent requests of the wealthy householders of the place to extend his stay there for a few more days. The professor could remember

only a few phrases from the first verse and my endeavours to unearth the poem have not been so far fruitful. I have filled up the blanks and completed the verse in this form. The words produced by the professor from memory are here underlined and the rest bracketed.

मशकि मधुरगीते [रात्रिसंवेशिनंमी सपदि परिचरन्ती  
दूरमुत्सार्य निद्राम् । ]

विहरसि निखिलाङ्गे रक्तरक्ता नितान्तं  
[क्षिपसि च समयं मे वल्लभेवाप्रभातम् ]

The mosquito is here ironically spoken of as a lady love! "She sings sweetly and attends on the bed, lovingly caressing the limbs. She is vehemently passionate—(intent upon sucking blood.)"

One Mr. Ranganatha Ayyar, a rich landlord of Nelpattur, held Brihmasri Sastrigal in great reverence and paid his respects to the latter often by going over to Mannargudi. Sometimes he persuaded Sastrigal to grace his village with his presence for a few days. His reverence to the distinguished guest was so high that he would attend to all his conveniences without himself ever intruding before the "*great one's*" presence except for paying the customary obeisance.

There is an anecdote about Brihmasri Sastrigal's visit to Karattur (in Coimbatore District) to which place he was invited to grace with his presence a *Yajna* performed by a descendant of the Appayya Dikshitar

family who was wealthy and distinguished for his learning too. Sastrigal was accompanied by several prominent shishyas and members of his family as was usual in all his trips. When the party arrived in a succession of carriages, there alighted first before the vast concourse of the people assembled for the receptions, Brahmasri Nilakantha Dikshita, one of Sastrigal's elderly shishyas and a member of the Appayya Dikshita line. The Dikshita was tall in stature and portly in form. His figure was such as could be prominent in any group. The eager crowd easily mistook him for Sastrigal himself and began prostrating before him at the very spot. One individual after another pressed nearer and nearer and in a few minutes whole groups were laying themselves low at his feet in endless succession. All his embarrassed remonstrances were of no avail. The other members of the party arriving behind enjoyed the fun for some time, till actually Sastrigal arrived and was recognised by the leaders of the reception.

In the year Khara 1891-2 the Kumbhabhishekam at Chidambaram took place. That was the occasion of Brihmasri Sastrigal's second visit to Chidambaram.✧

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✧ Mahamahopadhyaya Dandapani Svami Dikshitar of Chidambaram, a pupil of Mahamahopadhyaya Harihara Sastrigal, used to give his reminiscences of the "great one" who was his teacher's teacher, and this is one of them,

At that time a conference was arranged by Sri Nadukkaveri Srinivasa Sastrigal and Sri Panganadu Ganapati Sastrigal with the co-operation of Sri Bhaskara Setupati and Mr. Ramanathan of Ceylon, with a view to concerting measures for counteracting the propaganda of the Christian missionaries against the Hindu Religion and preventing the conversions carried on by them.

Brihmasri Sastrigal was requested to preside over the Conference and he agreed to do so only for the sake of a formality as he believed that younger men alone could deal with the problem ably. He cited as a well known instance of such formalities the priority accorded to the aged dancer entitled to the temple emoluments before a younger expert in Bharata Natyam was called upon to give her special performance. He spoke for some minutes on Chidambaram Kshetra and Sri Nataraja and then inaugurated the Conference in which the younger leaders delivered spirited addresses calling upon the Hindus to beware of Christian proselytism.

A few years later Brihmasri Sastrigal desired to go on a pilgrimage tour to the prominent shrines in the north as far as Tirupati. He gave up hopes of touring to far off Benares on account of his old age and his very strict adherence to the daily religious rites which he would not

relax for any reason. An invitation from the Maharaja of Kasi accompanied by a remittance of a thousand rupees for the touring expenses had to be declined consequently.

For the proposed shorter tour, Mr. A. Mahalinga Ayyar, Sastrigal's brother's son, made suitable arrangements. A railway carriage was reserved and a large party consisting of the members of Sastrigal's family and his friends joined in the tour. The Yatra comprised in its course *Tirupati*, *Kalahasti*, *Kanchi*, *Virinchipuram*, *Vridhachalam*, *Tiruvannamalai*, *Chidambaram*, *Kanjanoor*, *Tiruvadamarudur* and *Kumbhakonam*. The Kartika Sunday is sacred for the *Kula devata* of the *Adayappalam* family, *Sri Marga Sahaya Swami* at *Virinchipuram*. Brahmasri Sastrigal worshipped his *Kuladevata* at *Virinchipuram* on that sacred day and arrived at *Chidambaram* for the *Marga Sirsha Ardra Darsanam* of *Sri Nataraja*. He stayed for a week there during this third visit to that place and as there was a *Sadas* wherever he went, learned men gathered round him for participating in the meetings and the lay people always assembled in large numbers to hear the discourses and to have a *Darsana* of the "great one." A very learned *Vaishnava* scholar almost of the same age as Brahmasri Sastrigal himself took keen interest in the learned discourses which Sastrigal made at every place of his sojourn during the tour followed the party from *Kanchipuram* to *Chidambaram*; and during a

discourse at Chidambaram when Sastrigal was explaining a passage of Sri Vedanta Desika, the old scholar became so overpowered by ecstasy that he drew the notice of Sastrigal and then gave an account of himself.

Sri Ramana Rishi, when I once went to have his *Darsana*, on learning that I was the great-grandson of Brahmasri Raju Sastrigal, spoke in a reminiscent mood thus :—"When I was living on the hill, a *pindaram* who used to bring me food daily from below, came to me one day several hours late, and when I questioned him, he replied that Sri Raju Sastrigal had come on a pilgrimage to Tiruvannamalai and the people of the town in vast crowds hastened to have his *Darsana* and he too had gone there. The Rishi after recollecting this incident fell into a profound silence.

In 1895 (the year Manmatha) the Advaita Sabha of Kumbhakonam was founded under the presence of Brahmasri Sastrigal. On that occasion Sastrigal spoke in Sanskrit for three hours on *Gayatri Mahima*. The lecture was translated to the audience in Tamil by two eminent Pandits. Many who had listened to that great address went into raptures whenever they recollected that unforgettable experience.

## CHAPTER XIII

### MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

Brahmasri Sastrigal was once questioned by a gentleman who had received an English education, about the purpose of the religious rites enjoined by the Dharma Sastras and about the efficacy of the Mantras. His contention was that their purposefulness and validity were untenable. The "*great one*" in his reply attacked the problem from many sides not omitting to pass at the outset strictures on the irreverence and irresponsibility of one who had the presumption to challenge things in regard to the truth of which he had not cared to gather first-hand knowledge and had made no sincere attempt to give them an impartial trial before being prejudiced against them. He pointed out that the free thinker's drifting from the traditions of his ancestors was due to alien and unwholesome influences and that in these circumstances the latter had not been prudent enough to take caution not to be straying away into what may ultimately prove ruinous to the spiritual ideals

of his forefathers. He then referred to an incident in his own life and supported the efficacy of mantras from personal experience. "I was once stung by a scorpion on the toe, near the Gopinatha tank to which I went for my early morning bath. The pain was so severe that I shouted 'Hara, Siva, Siva' and had to be supported from falling by my pupils who were near me. An Andhra Sanyasi was then staying at the Gopinatha Mutt. He heard my cry and came to the spot to enquire the reason. When he was told what had happened he exclaimed "Bhayam ledu!" (No fear! No fear!), and descending into the tank took a handful of water and sprinkled it over my toe uttering some Mantra. The next minute I could not say which toe it was that was stung by the scorpion and the agony had all passed away like a bad dream." The "great one" then expatiated upon the significance of *Karmanushthana*. The sceptic felt a revolution in his mind, fell at the feet of the great guru and with a repentant heart resolved to turn over a new leaf in his life.

In this connection it may be mentioned that the "great one" never uttered ejaculations like "Iyyo" (Alas), under pain or sorrow whatever might be the intensity of the shock. The holy names of Siva were always on his lips in pleasure and pain. It used to be observed that in greetings too the Siva-Nama came in handy to him. After the performance of the *Yajna* there were some periodic rites to be performed, and Tiruvayyar

Kuppuswami sroutigal was to officiate on such occasions. During the mornings Brahmasri Sastrigal was so fully engaged in his religious duties of sacred recitals or his duties as a teacher, that visitors, however important their mission, dared not make an immediate and direct approach to his presence. Kuppuswami Sastrigal knew that Brahmasri Sastrigal should have been anxiously awaiting his arrival. To relieve this anxiety, soon after he arrived he used to shout out the names of Siva from the front yard. "Sambho, Mahadeva!" Quick came the reply from inside as a token of welcoming the visitor "Siva, Sankara ! Mahadeva !" Both went on with their duties until they met at the proper hour.

Mr. A. Sambamurti Ayyar used to give many recollections of his paternal uncle. Having taken to English education, he had very early contracted the habit of drinking coffee. The drinking was a novelty in those days and when the "*great one*" wanted to know the product from which it was prepared, Mr. Ayyar convinced him that it was a vegetable product and indigenous. In matters like this Sastrigal was tolerant and was content with satisfying himself that there was nothing particularly objectionable from the the view-point of the Dharma Sastras and *Sadachara*.

Mr. Ayyar used to attribute to the mystic powers of his uncle, of which the possessor himself was perhaps unconscious, a kind of premonition of a calamity which he had touching the life of Mr. Ayyar. Mr. A.

Mahalinga Ayyar was on a visit to Mannargudi, and on his taking leave, Sastrigal expressed a premonition of his mind to the former regarding his youngest brother (M.A. Sambamurti Ayyar) who was then at Madras, indicating bad times. Mr. Mahalinga Ayyar assured his uncle ♦ that the recent letters showed that all was well at Madras with Mr. Sambamurti. But no sooner had Mr. Mahalinga Ayyar proceeded as far as Nidamangalam enroute to Madura, than an acquaintance of his who had been to Madras shortly before brought the news to him that Mr. Sambamurti had a fall from a Jutka and had broken his leg and that he was progressing well in the hospital. Shocked by this news and remembering the warning given by the "great one" Mr. Mahalinga Ayyar proceeded to Madras immediately.

Mr. Sambamurti Ayyar had a slight limp all through his life due to this accident.

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♦Sastrigal was familiarly known in the family circle as "Muttanna"

## CHAPTER XIV

## GRANDSON AND GREATGRANDSON

Brahmasri Sastrigal's grandson Sri *Yajnasvami* was invested with the sacred thread at the age of seven and the Vedic education was entrusted to Brahmasri Subrahmanya Sastrigal who lived nearby and who was an agnatic relation and a sishya also. One day the Vedic teacher cruelly lashed the tender boy with a tamarind twig for his slackness in learning. Sastrigal's wife was excited with grief and rage and she took the weeping grandson to Sastrigal's presence and said, "Why should the child be entrusted to that heartless man! Could you not spare time to teach him yourself? See how he is bleeding!" Sastrigal slowly replied, "If you fondle your grandson too much he cannot acquire learning." and left the matter there without a further word or thought.

After the grandson had completed his *Veda Adhyayana*, Sastrigal entrusted his education in *Kavya* and the initial texts on *Tarka* to Brahmasri Radhanarasimhapuram Nilakantha Dikshita. After their

preliminary equipment, the grandson was admitted into the regular classes conducted by Sastrigal to batches of sishyas in Tarka and Vyakarna. Panganadu Ganapati Sastrigal was an elderly class-mate of his and very close friend. Brihmasri Yajnasvami Sastrigal attained very quickly proficiency in all the Sastras. He was especially learned in Tarka and Vedanta. He was the last pupil of Sastrigal. When his studies were about to be finished with the lessons in Mimamsa Sastra, some of the older students eagerly joined the class in order not to lose the very last opportunity of listening to the great teacher's discourses. Palamarneri Svamigal who was then teaching the Sastras to Sri S. Kuppuvami Sastrigal at Ganapati Agraharam, took leave of the latter for one year for refreshing himself from the fountain of knowledge once again. He promised to teach Mimamsa to his sishya after his return with reinforced scholarship. Sri Kuppusvami Sastrigal was fortunate enough to learn Mimamsa from the Svamigal on the latter's return to the place after the refresher course.

Sri Yajnasvami displayed at a very early age great taste for poetry and music. Once some gentlemen approached Brahmasri Sastrigal with a request to draft for them a *Patrika* in Sanskrit verses commending their virtuous proposal to found a *Nandavana*—a flower garden, for producing flowers for worship. Sastrigal asked his grandson to try his hand at composing the verses suitable for the *Patrika*, and became agreeably surprised to find that the grandson's poetic gifts of a very high order. He observed, "My dear child! No one will believe that you wrote these verses. Every one will attribute the authorship to me!"

Sri Yajnasvami had also the gift of music in him. His voice was charmingly sweet and he had heard Mahavaidyānatha Ayyar several times. There was an adjacent extension with a secluded hall at the eastern side of the residential house, and there Sri Yajnasvami spent his leisure hours, with a *Tambura* in hand singing *Carnatic* melodies with his enchanting voice. Whether or not the "great one" watched the grandson's musical tendencies with pleasure one cannot say; but there never escaped from him the slightest hint that he was displeased. One who led such an austere life as Brahmasri Sastrigal especially in those days of old world ideas, could he expected to frown upon the levity of a youth who was ear-marked for a career of Sastraic scholarship and rigorous religious life, displaying a partiality to music. But Sastrigal himself had a fine appreciation of music and revered musical savants like Muthusvami Dikshitar and Thyagayya. It is said that he regretted that he had not personally seen the saint of *Tiruvayyar* though he had heard of him during his younger days. He once admonished a young student of music to sing Muttusvami Dikshitar's Kirtans with accuracy as they consisted of Mantras. He said that Thyagayyar's Kritis could be learnt by beginners, but Dikshitar's Kritis were fit only for a maturer age.

Sastrigal loved to hear Mahavaidyānatha Sivan sing and he chose from among his pupils Sri Appasvami Sastri for reading the *Maha Bharata* to him because of his fine voice and musical ability.

Brahmasri Sastrigal himself, my father used to say, adopted the Kambhoja Raga for the Archana recital when engaged in the daily puja.

Brihmasri Sastrigal was 82 years old when in 1897 his wife passed away after a brief illness. Her last regret was that she could not live to see a great-grandson born to her. Sastrigal assured her that her grand-daughter-in-law then in advanced pregnancy would be belivered of a male child, and persuaded he not to die with a regret in her mind, but to take it as an accomplished fact that she had caressed her great-grandson on her lap. The devoted wife declared that her heart was contented with the imagination of the happy event.

When the mortal remains of his wife were being borne to the crematorium, the "*great one*" exclaimed with tears, "there she goes away with my Agnihotra", for the performance of Agnihotra is enjoined on a grihastha only during the life-time of the "*Patni*". Sastrigal's attachment so Karma was so great that his sorrow on his wife's death was the more poignant on account of its depriving him of the "*Patni*" holding a ritualistic status in the household.

A great-grandson was born to Sastrigal just two months after his wife's demise as he had assured her on her deathbed. When the child was a few months old, Sastrigal coming to the inner apartment for his *Puja*, saw the child laid on the floor, kicking lustily with innocent glee. He then sat by its side laying down the

water vessel in his hand and, gently passing his hand over the child from head to foot spoke with his heart overflowing with affection and tenderness. "I insisted on my grandson being brought up in the traditional line of education; but in your case my counsel may not prevail and I am sure you will be put into the English School. Be it as it might be. In whatever line you are put, may you attain high proficiency."

When the great-grand-child was of the age of crawling on all fours, Sastrigal one day took it in both his hands when he went out to teach a batch of Sishyas one of whom was the Palamarneri Swamigal and laid it before the Swamigal saying "कटाक्ष्यतामयं शिशुः." "May your Holiness' blessings be on this child!"

When the great-grandson grew to be five years old, the "great one" conducted his *Akshara-Abhyasa* himself personally.

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## CHAPTER XV

### CLOSING YEARS

Brihmasri Sastrigal carried on the religious rites and duties strictly according to the Smritis and Kutachara with austere devotion and sincere faith, without the slightest blemish, lapse or slackening until his 85th or 86th year. And up to that age he went on with his classes also. After he reached the age of 87 he needed help for even his limited movements. His daughter-in-law Mangalambal was then devotedly attending to his needs. Her services to the "*Great one*" raised her in the esteem of one and all. Once, Brihmasri Parittizar Krishna Sastrigal calling on his guru to pay his respects, complimented the daughter-in-law on her devotion to so sacred a duty. The "*Great one*" replied, "She is now to me a mother as well as a daughter-in-law."

As days passed on Brahmasri Sastrigal became practically bed-ridden. In the year *Subhakrit* (1902-3) when he entered his 88th year he had a hacking cough

and felt that he was approaching his end. He called his son Sri Nilakantha Dikshita to his side and said, "I do think I shall survive long, I have no interest in life and I am prepared to meet the final dissolution. I wish that you should continue in your strict adherence to *Sadachara* and dedicate your life to the worship of God."

Then turning to his grandson who was standing nearby in humble love and reverence, he said, "this cough is to me a blessing in disguise as it will lead me to the realisation of eternal bliss. I entrust you with the duty of imparting instruction to such as come to you seeking knowledge. Let your time be devoted to the study of the great works of Sri Appayya Dikshita, and in course of time your Bhakti to Siva will become firmly rooted. True happiness consists not in wealth or worldly position, but in contentment, purity and kindness to others and a right appraisal of values and sincere Bhakti to Iswara."

After these words of advice he again added with a gentle smile beaming upon his toothless countenance, "Look at me, how prepared I am to start for the other world with firmness and sanguine hopes." Just there looking up and seeing his grandson in tears, he again spoke with tenderness, "Do not weep. What is inevitable must come to pass and no wise man will grieve for the final debt all flesh has to pay to nature. Has not death removed the mightiest conquerors as well as the wisest thinkers from the face of the earth? It is only the ignorant that mourn at the dissolution of the body. But the wise fix their eyes on the soul." He concluded with a few more words of advice on the ideal of selfless action held forth in the *Gita*.

During these last days there were frequent visitors to Sastrigal's house—men of all ranks, Sishyas and relations, high officials, eminent scholars, devoted friends, and others who came to have a last look at the "*Great one*". It was just about that time that Brihmasri Parittiyur Krishna Sastrigal gave expositions of the Ramayana for over a month in the presence of the "*Great one*" as a kind of dedication of the art by which he had won wonderful renown all over South India. The "*Great one*" was seated on a Pitha with a reclining plank behind and a select audience filled the house. A serene silence prevailed and Krishna Sastrigal sang the glories of Sri Rama with a mastery over the art of exposition which he had acquired through an unintermittent practice for over thirty years. The "*Great one*" sat self-absorbed with closed eyes. But such was the infirmity of old age that his head drooped on one side and had often to be lifted up by those who were watching him from near.

In the month of Kartika (in the third week of November 1902) the "*Great one*" desired to have his *Prayaschitta* performed in accordance with the Sastras. Numerous Vedic scholars participated in the ceremony and they felt that the purification was more for themselves than for the *grā* one. Sastrigal's brother's sons, Svami Dikshita of Tiruvaloor and Mahalinga Ayyar of Madura were present on the occasion. When the news of the *Prayaschitta* spread, people began to pour in for the last *Darsan* of the "*Great one*".

But an astrologer named Subrahmanya Josyer made elaborate calculations according to the science and put off the day of *Nirayana* to a date three months later. Nobody could then believe that the "great one's" life could endure so long. Yet, not only did three months pass but the *Nirayana* took place exactly on the day predicted by the astrologer, the 21st of the Magha month, Wednesday—(4th March 1903). Only in the predetermination of the *Naligais* had the astrologer erred. He had noted the *Naligais* as 15 noon; the event occurred at 15 *Naligais* midnight.

All the four or five months before the end, the "*great one*" lay on his bed with closed eyes scarcely moving this or that side. The bed and the clothes were changed from time to time. He had to be fed with milk with a spoon. When food was announced to him, he just opened his eyes. His tongue was then cleaned with a wet cloth and a few drops of milk were given. He was always seen muttering some Mantra or the sacred names of God with a slight motion of the lips. His consciousness was bright and vigorous; for he would correct any ungrammatical word slipping from the mouth of a Pandit-visitor who addressed him in Sanskrit expressing sentiments appropriate to the occasion.

During the last moments of his life, a large circle of sishyas chanted the holy Vedic Mantras and the Upanishads. The son was busy with the rites prescribed for the occasion and the grandson sat at the beloved master's feet with eyes filled with tears.

When the news that the great teacher had passed away spread, the whole town was in mourning. The offices, the schools and even the Wesleyan Mission College of the place were closed as a mark of respect to the departed scholar, teacher and saint.

The funeral was one of the most impressive events ever witnessed in the town. The residents of the town, Brahmins and others, officials and non-officials, the rich and the poor, students of the several institutions, friends and relations, Sishyas and admirers made a long procession to the crematorium. And as the rites were finished there, one and all felt that a void had been created which could never be filled up.

## CHAPTER XVI

### A GREAT MAN

We may now close this brief sketch with a description of Brihmasri Rajusastrigal's tastes and inclinations so far as we can gather from people who had the privilege of knowing him intimately. Though in his later days his time was mostly spent in the teaching of philosophical and religious subjects, he retained till the close of his life a keen appreciation of poetry and the drama. The works of Kalidasa, Murari and Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar were his great favourites. He was an admirer of Sri Vedanta Desika too. He would frequently quote from that author's *Sankalpa Suryodaya*, and the Vaishnavite scholars would often consult him on knotty passages in the *Tattva-muktakalapa* and *Achyuta Sataka*. His acquaintance with the works of the Madhwas was also well-known. His love of books especially of the works of Sri Appayya Dikshita may be inferred from the fact that late in his life he once went to Tiruvarur and stayed there for three days to have a look into a manuscript of

the *Sivarkamani Dipika* in the possession of a certain resident of that town who was pardonably reluctant to lend it to others. When, later Sri Halasyanatha Sastri of Kumbakonam published the great work, Sastri's joy knew no bounds.

His usual relaxation in leisure hours was, we have observed already, to hear readings from the *Ramāyana* and *Mahabharata*.

Sectarian bigotry was conspicuously absent in his worship. Sri Dakshinamurti and Sri Krishna were equally adored by him. He entertained throughout his life a special devotion to Sri Tyagaraja at Tiruvarur and Sri Rajagopala Swami at Mannargudi. He regularly attended the annual festivals of both the deities and has left us devotional poems composed by him in adoration of the two deities and on the annual festivals connected with them. Wherever he might he have gone he made it a point to return to Mannargudi to worship Sri Rajagopalaswami on the day of the *Caandraprabha* festival. During the *Rudrapada* festival at Tiruvarur, he stayed with his brother's son Svami Dikshitar at the ancestral house on the north bank of the *Kamalalaya* Tank. He once observed to a questioner who wondered why he was so particular about attending temple festivals which belonged to the province of popular religion, that *लोकसंग्रह* (setting an example to the common people) was as much a duty of a man of learning as the practice of the philosophic goal.

In his domestic life Brihmasri Sastrigal displayed such love and such consideration for the feelings of others as one would expect of a man of his rare culture and high character. His affection and regard for his mother in her old age were unbounded. When once the lady complained to him that the rice flour cake served to her was sour, he declared that he would himself prepare the dough and bake the cake unless better attention was bestowed on giving satisfaction to his mother.

Brihmasri Sastrigal was very kind to his brother and to his brother's sons. Mr. A. Mahalinga Ayyar of Madura was intimate with the family at Minnargudi and helped his brother Sri Nilakantha Dikshita, Sastrigal's adopted son, in the management of the affairs of the family. Sastrigal left the entire conduct and control of all secular and economic matters to his adopted son. Any presents placed at his feet by his devotees were taken charge of by his adopted son. On one occasion a large amount of money was offered to him by a visitor, when Sri Nilakantha Dikshita was not in town: Sastrigal temporarily deposited the heap of coins over the top of the wall of the Agnihotra room. There it lay some days and when Sri Nilakantha Dikshita arrived, it was found that the money had disappeared. None dared to enter the Agnihotra room; but an urchin who was distantly related to the family and who used to frequent the house was inferred to have scraped the money away. But the matter was never brought to light.

Sastrigal's second daughter whose husband was improvident was the recipient of the amount which occasionally stagnated in Sastrigal's hands. Once Sri Nilakantha Dikshita asked his adoptive father's permission to sue his second sister's father-in-law for the recovering of a debt about to become time barred. Sastrigal replied "Do what you think proper to do. I have nothing to say on such matters."

This detachment from secular interests in life was a natural trait of his character from his earliest to his last days. His one thought in life was the scrupulous observance of Dharma and Dharma was the royal road to spiritual realization. All else in life was naught to him. He pursued his ideal path with a singleness of purpose and serenity which admitted of no slackening of the pace or frittering of the energy on digressions. Wealth, honour or fame were neither courted assiduously when they kept a distance, nor were they welcomed with eager glee when they waited upon him unsolicitedly. To the end of his life he was comparatively poor. But he never felt the pinch of penury, nor ever aspired to enjoy the comforts of plenty. He was an institution first to last supported by the benevolence which welled up as from a natural spring from those who adored him as a personification of ideals which were held in high esteem by them. Brahmasri Sastrigal had no trace of egotism in his character, and his humility was astonish-

ing. He was also entirely free from the petty jealousies and the envious gossip which is very often noticed in scholars even of great reputation. In fact he had no time for such mean occupations.

The most striking part of Brahmasri Sastrigal's character was his extraordinary devotion to his gurus. It was a feeling akin to piety or adoration. Towards Sri Gopalacharya, his first guru, he cherished feelings of reverence not unmingled with love. He would often say that he owed all his position to his guru's kindness and benevolence. It was not a mere lip devotion that he professed but a sentiment rooted in him so deeply that even after Sri Gopalacharya's death, it was as strong and as lasting as ever before. On the anniversary of Sri Gopalacharya's death he took very late meals. The guru was his spiritual father and received the same devotion and reverence that was due to his father.

On the Upakarma day, after the performance of the rituals and worship and before sitting for the meal he used to walk to the house of his guru Sri Gopalacharya to do prostrations at the feet of his Guru-Patni. And again, he would as a mark of respect stand up and receive Sri Krishnamacharya, the son of his Guru on his first meeting the latter though, the recipient of the honour was considerably younger in years and was besides his own pupil.

Similar in every respect was his attitude of worshipful piety to the memory of Sri Narayananda Sarasvati and Sri Svayamprakasa Svamigal. He conducted *Aradhana* on the *Tithis* sacred to their memory and every year paid a visit to offer worship at the Samadhi of Sri

Swayamprakasa Swamigal at *Kanjanoor*. Doing prostrations to elders, to teachers and to persons entitled to reverence is insisted on by the *Smriti*'s as a sacred duty, and Brahmasri Sastrigal despite his venerable age and unparalleled social eminence was an exemplar of this precept. It has been noticed already how Sastrigal did "*Vandana*" to his Sanyasi pupils every day before he began the instructions. Palamarneri Swamigal used to tell Sri Kuppusvami Sastrigal how hard it was for him to reconcile himself to the formality. Whenever Sastrigal happened to pass through Lakshmangudi on his way to Tiruvarur, he never failed to prostrate at the feet of his mother-in-law (the mother of his deceased first wife).

During his last days, when some one put it to Sastrigal, if he entertained any intention of taking up *Sannyasa*, he replied in the negative and added, "I have not completely conquered all attachment and moreover the great Dikshita himself died as a Grihastha."

Such was Brihmasri Rajusastrigal of Mannargudi—pure in thought, word and deed — distinctly indifferent to the secular aspects of life, devoted whole-heartedly to the attainment of a goal definitely set before himself, the great and ideal teacher in whose *Sishyaparampara* several Mahamahopadhyayas are counted, a modern exemplar of the ideal Brahmanic life, a saintly personality who revived the glories of the age of the *Rishis* for more than half a century within recent memory, a *Sarvatantra Svatantra* in the fullest sense of the term and an earnest seeker of the *Pratyag Atman* amidst the trammels of *Samsara*, who in his own time was universally respected and acknowledged as a "great man". May his memory live and his example inspire and guide us for ever!

OM TAT SAT

**BOOK TWO**

**APPAYYA DIKSHITA AND DESCENDANTS**

By

**SWAMI SIVANANDA**

**AND OTHERS**



**APPAYYA DIKSHITA (A.D. 150). ♦**

Appayya Dikshita lived probably in the middle of the sixteenth century, as he refers to Nrsimhasrama Muni, who lived early in that century. He was a great scholar, well-read in many branches of Sanskrit learning, and he wrote a large number of works on many subjects. His grandfather was Acharya Diks ita, who is said to have been famous for his scholarship from the Himalayas to the south point of India; the name of his father was Rangaraja Makhindra (or simply Raja Makhindra). There is, however, nothing very noteworthy in his Vedantic doctrines. For in spite of his scholarship, he was only a good compiler and not an original thinker, and on many occasions where he had opportunities of giving original views he contents himself with the views of others. It is sometimes said that he had two different religious views at two different periods of his life, Saiva and the Vedanta. But of this one cannot be certain for he was such an all-round scholar that the fact that he wrote a Saiva commentary and a Vedantic commentary need not lead to the supposition that he changed his faith. In the beginning of his commentary Sivarkamani Dipika on Srikantha's Saiva commentary to the Brahma-sutra he says that, though the right interpretation of the Brahma-sutra is the monistic interpretation, as attempted by Sankara and others, yet the desire for attaining this right wisdom of oneness (advaita-vasana) arises only through the grace

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♦From Sri Prof.S.N. Das Gupta's "History of Indian Philosophy".

of Siva, and it is for this reason that Vyasa in his Brahma-sutra tried to establish the superiority of the qualified Brahman Siva as interpreted by Srikantacharya. This shows that even while writing his commentary on Srikantha's Siva-bhasya he had not lost respect for the monistic interpretations of Sankara, and he was somehow able to reconcile in his mind the Saiva doctrine of qualified Brahman (Saguna-Brahma) as Siva with the Sankara doctrine of unqualified pure Brahman. It is possible, however, that his sympathies with the monistic Vedanta, which at the beginning were only lukewarm, deepened with age. He says in his Sivarka-mani-dipika that he lived in the reign of King Cinnabomma (whose land-grant inscriptions date from Sadasiva, Maharaja of Vijayanagara, A.D. 1566 to 1575; vide Hultzsch, S.I. Inscriptions, Vol. I), under whose orders he wrote the Sivarka-mani-dipika commentary on Srikantha's commentary. His grandson Nilakantha Diksita says in his Siva-lilarnava that Appaya Diksita lived to the good old age of seventy-two. In the Oriental Historical Manuscripts catalogued by Taylor, Vol. II, it is related that at the request of the Pandya King Tirumalai Nayaka he came to the Pandya country in A.D. 1626 to settle certain disputes between the Saivas and the Vaisnavas. Kalahasti-sarana-Sivananda Yogindra, in his commentary on the Atmarpani-stava, gives the date of Appayya Diksita's birth as Kali age 4654, or A.D. 1554, as pointed out by Mahamahopadhyaya Kuppusvami Sastri in his Sanskrit introduction to the Siva-lilarnava. Since he lived seventy-two years, he must have died some time in

1626, the very year in which he came to the Pandya country. He had for his pupil Bhattoji Dikshita, as is indicated by his own statement in the Tantra-siddhanta-dipika the latter author. Bhattoji Diksita must therefore have been a junior contemporary of Appayya Diksita, as is also evidenced by his other statement in his Tattvakaustubha that he wrote this work at the request of King Keladi Venkatendra, who reigned from 1604 to 1626 (vide Hultzsch's second volume of reports on Sanskrit Manuscripts).

It is said that Appayya Diksita wrote about four hundred works. Some of them may be mentioned here: Advaita-nirnaya, Catur-mata sara- samgraha (containing in the first chapter, called Nyaya-muktavali, a brief summary of the doctrines of Madhva, in the second chapter, called Naya-mayukha-malika, the doctrines of Ramanuja, in the third chapter the decisive conclusions from the point of view of Srikantha's commentary called Naya-manimala and in the fourth chapter, called Naya-manjari, decisive conclusions in accordance with the views of Sankaracarya); Tattva -muktavali, a work on Vedanta; Vyakaranavada-naksatra-mala, a work on grammar; Purvottara-mimamsa-vada-naksatra-(mala containing various separate topics of discussion in Mimamsa and Vedanta); Nyaya-raksa-mani, a commentary on the Brahma sutra following the monistic lines of Sankara; Vedanta-kalpa-taruparimala, a commentary on Amalananda's Vedanta-kalpa-taru, a commentary on Vacaspati's Bhamati commentary; Siddhanta-lesa-

samgraha, a collection of the views of different philosophers of the monistic school of Sankara on some of the most important points of Vedaanta, without any attempt at harmonizing them or showing his own preference by reasoned arguments, and comprising a number of commentaries by Acyutakrsnananda Tirtha (Krisnalamkara), Gangadharendra Saraswati (Siddhanta-bindu-sikhara), Ramacandra Yajvan (Gudhartha-prakasa), Visvanatha Tirtha, Dharmaya Diksita and others; Sivarka-mari-dipika, a commentary on Srikantha's Saiva-bhasya on the Brahma-sutra; Sivakarnamrta; Siva-tattva-viveka; Siva-purana-tamasatva-khandana; Sivadvaita-nirnaya; Sivananda-lahari-candrika, a commentary on Sankara's Sivananda-candrika, Sivotkarsa-candrika; Sivotkarsa-manjari, Saiva-kalpa-druma; Siddhanta-ratnakara; Madhva-mukhi-bhanga, an attempt to show that Madhva's interpretation of the Brahma-sutra is not in accordance with the meaning of the texts of the Upanisads; Ramanuja-mata-khandana; Ramayana-tatparya-nirnaya; Ramayana-tatparya-samgraha; Ramayana-bharata-sara-samgraha Ramayana-sara; Ramayana-sara-samgraha; Ramayana-sara-stava; Mimamsadhi karana-mala Upakrama, a short Mimamsa work; Dharma-mimamsa-paribhasa; Nama-samgraha-malika; Vidhi-rasayana; Vidhi-rasa yanopajivani; Vrtti-varrtika, a short work on the threefold meanings of words; Kuvalayananda, a work on rhetoric on which no less than ten commentaries have been written; Citra-mimamsa, a work on rhetoric; gayollasa-nidhi, a commentary on the Bhagavataa-purana; Yadavabhyudaya-tika, a commentary on Venkata's Yadavabhyudaya; a commentary on the Prabodha-candrodaya nataka, etc.

## NILAKANTHA DIKSHITAR

Three hundred years ago an exalted and sagacious personality known as Nilakantha Dikshitar dwelt in South India. He was a born genius. a poet, a picturesque philosopher, an unparalleled devotee, a highly distinguished statesman with a receptive and responsive, subtle and penetrating intellect. He could remember anything even at the first reading.

Nilakantha Dikshitar was the brother of Appayya Dikshitar who was on the peak of intellectual integrity and divine realisation. Appayya wrote volumes on spiritual and philosophical subjects and was even considered as an incarnatoin of God Siva.

The time came for the family-partition and Nilakantha was asked by the adorable Appayya Dikshitar to spell out his shares. The wise and discerning Nilakantha implored for his blessings (wisdom) and nothing else. Highly pleased, Appayya blessed him with wisdom no doubt. but material prosperity too followed.

One day while he was delivering lectures on Devi Mahatmya in the orthodox and soul-stirring style of the ancient times' the then puissant ruler, Tirumala Nayak, of the Pandyan kingdom at Madura was bewitched by the boy's depth of wisdom, his brilliance and sublimity of speech, and made up his mind to make this matchless youth his Prime Minister and Court Pandit.

A condition there was at that time for premier-ship which was simple but was an enigma not easy of solution. It eluded the understanding of even the mighty brains. But it was quite simple for Nilakantha. He answered it.

In the very midst of royal splendour and many a pleasure he led a simple life of the pious, a serene life of the philosopher, an austere life of the recluse, an intensely devoted life of the mystic.

Under the direct supervision of Nilakantha, Sundaramurti Asari who had reached the acme of perfection in art, chiselled the statue of the queen of Tirumalai Naick for placing it in the Pandu Mandapam which was under construction then : but to his misfortune an undesirable event took place. A thin slice flew away from the right thigh of the queen's statue, making a conspicuous lacuna therein. Again he tried, but in vain ! Nilakantha of comprehensive vision knowing the mole in the thigh of the queen told the sculptor, who was perturbed beyond description, to leave the statue as it was.

The king came to know of the whole story. He was clouded by suspicion, deluded by misunderstanding and fury and with his confused intelligence commanded the arrest of Nilakantha.

Nilakantha at this time was waving arati (camphor) to the Mother of the Universe, Meenakshi whose staunch

upasaka he was. By the grace of the Mother and through intuitive perception he knew of the storm raised in the mind of the king and of his command. He added some more camphor to the light and applied it to his eyes and and left them blind.

The king heard of this tragic incident and came to his senses. Drowned in the ocean of repentance and remorse, the king ran to the crystal pure Nilakantha to beg pardon of him. Nilakanta of all-compassion, tender feelings and inimitable devotion, poured out his heart to the Mother in 105 verses for the restoration of his eyesight and to save the king from remorse.

From that day Nilakantha out off the bonds that bound him to the Royal Court. Tirumalai Nayak, the ruler, honoured him by presenting the jagir of Palamadai, four miles from Tinnevely village.

In his last days, the Devotion-intoxicated Nilakantha who was a glorious saint and sage wrote several inspired works which are natural and spontaneous, sublime and elevating, scholarly and vibrant with feeling. He took to Sanyasa and entered into Samadhi.

## KODAHANALLUR SUNDARASWAMIGAL

(A Short Life-Study)

The nineteenth century in South Indian religious history has been dominated by great personalities. One of the most marvellous of such types was Saint Ramalingam. Eight years after Chidambaram Ramalinga Swamigal's birth was born pious Kodahanallur Sundaraswamigal who exerted a powerful spiritual influence on the many devotees who came under his notice. One Sivanandaswami of Tinnevely, a disciple of Sri Sundaraswamigal, is believed to have a full collection of the many mysterious incidents of the Swami's life. Mr. K. Ramabhadra Sarma has written an appreciative and sympathetic life of the Swamigal in the "Lokopakari" (Tamil). A more discriminating and valuable account is that by the late R. V. Kameswarier of Pudukotah published by the "Janamitran" Press, a free use of which has been kindly permitted to me by the editor of the "Janamitran".

### Birth and Training

Sundaram was born of Yagneswara Sastri and Kamakshi Ammal at Gangaikondan (Tinnevely Dt.) in the Srivatsa Gotra with the Anusha (Anuradha) star in the Rihsabha Lagna on 2.12.1831 (per Arimalam Kamakshinatha Josyar). Descended as he was in the collateral line of the illustrious Appayya Dikshitar, Siva-Bhakti was running in his veins. Not eighteen months had passed after the birth of this child when his

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♦ by Prof. K. R. R. Sastri, M. A., M. L.

parents passed away. The boy's maternal uncle took him to Pattamadai. The fifth year saw Aksarabhyasa (instruction in the alphabet) and he was invested with the sacred thread in his seventh year. Under Sundara Sastri of Viravanallur, boy Sundaram learnt the Prasthanas-Traya, viz., Brahmasutra Bhasya, Upanishad Bhasyas and Gita Bhasya, and the orthodox training in Vyakarana, Tarka and Purva Mimamsa was also had under this learned Guru. Sundaram was leading an austere Brahmachari's life and had already begun to specialise in Suta-Samhita, which was bound to take him to many parts of the Tamil country.

#### Marriage and Travels

His maternal uncle Venkatasubbier had Sundaram married to Janaki, daughter of Ramasubbier, one of the orthodox devotees of Siva. Sundaram was invited to stay at Adaichani and presented with Banalinga, Nataraja and Sivakami (Parvati) Murtis by his father-in-law for worship. Sundaram had also Upadesa from Visweswara Sastri of Adaichani. Sundaram, like another great contemporary of his, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (vide the interesting parallel drawn between the two by the late Mr. B.V.Kameswarier in his sketch in Tamil) initiated his wife also into this path of Knowledge (Jnana) so that she could be a true partner. By this time, his reputation as an illustrious exponent of Suta-Samhita had spread to distant districts.

From Bana-Tirtha and Kalyana-Tirtha near the

source of the Tamraparni, Sundaram went on a pilgrimage to all the sacred spots in the course of that river as far as Trichendur. The quest of a pilgrimage to the North has always been a phase in the life of true Hindu devotees in this land; and Sundaram with his devotees went to Madura, Tiruvanaikaval, Tiruvaiyar, Mayavaram, Shiyali, Tiruvenkadu, Chidambaram, Vriddhachalam, Kalahasti and reached Kasi, the place of Moksa *par excellence*.

Every Hindu is ordained to begin some mark of sacrifice after his return from Kasi. Sundaram practised Mauna (silence) and attained further stages in his Samadhi. On an invitation from Kodahanallur, Sundaram finished Suta-Samhita according to the Panchaha practice in five days. Sudhamalli was visited by Sundaram and on the second day when Sundaram was explaining to the reading of the text by Seshachala Dikshitar of Kadayam, Sundaram heard the call from within and at once crossed the second Asrama and became a true Vidwat-Sannyasi.

#### Swami's Preachings

Our Swami, who was now in his 23rd year, was living in the Sankaracharya Math at Tinnevely. As his spiritual practices were demanding a secluded locality, Swamiji hied to the bamboo-bushes near the Kodahanallur tank. Kodahanallur being the locality where Swamiji attained higher stages in his life as a Yogi before his thirtieth year, our Swami has since been known as Kodahanllur Swamigal in the Tamil land.

### Swami and South Indian Temples

At Swamiji's instance, a devotee presented a golden stick to Kantimati Amman, the presiding Deity at Tinnevely. Swamiji collected sufficient funds and celebrated the Laksa-Dipa—the feast of 1,00,000 lamps—in the Tinnevely temple in 1864. While at Kurukuthurai, the seat of a famous Subrahmanya's shrine near Tinnevely, many devotees hastened to him. His advice to them was always intended to take them to the next higher stage in their religious careers.

Saundarya Pandyan Pillai, a true disciple of Sundara Swamigal and Swamigal started to Pudukottah. Suta Samhita, one of the most sacred texts of the Vedic lore, was explained to an appreciative audience at Pudukottah. Swamiji went to Kumbakonam, Chidambaram and Tiruvannamalai and returned to Tinnevely. Then he went back to Pudukottah and Arimalam Sivarama Chettiar, one of his chief disciples, took him to Arimalam, and the Swamigal had the Astabandhana Kumbhabhiseka of the Sri Minaksi Temple there. Swamigal had a round of visits to many villages of Chettinad and performed the Kumbhabhiseka of Tiruvaiyar. It was here that Mahavaidyanathier, the great musician, became his disciple.

On his return the residents of Gangaikondan waited on Swamiji to have the Kumbhabhiseka of Anandavalli and Kailasanather. Forthwith along with Sivaraman Chettiar he went to Colombo on invitation

and returned with sufficient wealth and performed Kumbhabhiseka at Gangaikondan. Prof. M. A. Sundaram Pillai of the Trivandrum college requested the Swamigal to reduce all his marvellous talks to writing and the Swamigal agreed to it.

### Swamigal's Siddhi

Swamigal went to Kulasekharapatnam and had his Suta-Samhita expositions. Prior to his return to Arimalam, Swamigal should have met Saint Ramalingam at Chidambaram. Two great men met each other at Chidambaram and Ramalingam is said to have prophesied the nearing of the Samadhi of Sundara Swamigal. At Arimalam, the abode of that true disciple Sivaraman Chettiar, Swami collected his talks on Vedagama-Sampradaya-Prakaranam ending with the Mahavakya Prakaranam into "Nijananda-Vilasa", his third work; and gave it to his staunch disciples. At Arimalam, an Annadana Chhatram (place where food is distributed among the poor) was built at Swami's instance and twenty-two Kumbhabhisekas owe their celebration to the strenuous efforts of the Swamigal. Before a gathering of eminent disciples after ordaining his disciples to worship the Bana-Linga entrusted to him, Swamigal attained Siddhi on 6th April, 1881, at Arimalam. Sivaraman Chettiar had a Samadhi erected at the sacred spot wherein the Bana-Linga of the pious Sundara Swamigal has been installed.

### Swamiji's Contribution

As one of the foremost Siva Bhaktas who had attained a high stage of spiritual power, Swamiji had a wide following. Sadasiva and his other disciples had

the benefit of Swamiji's Tamil works on "Sivamu bhuti Rasayana", "Swanubhava-Rasamanjari" and "Nijananda Vilasa".

Above all, Swamiji like his contemporary Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa had the Nirvikalpa Samadhi while very young. Both had many pious non-twice-born cast-men as disciples. As B. V. Kameswarier puts it, while Paramahansa shone amidst us owing to the blessing of Goddess Kali, Sundara Swamigal had to go through the portals of Vedic learning through a Guru. The saintly Kodahanallur Swami with his Vibhuti (sacred ash), Rudraksha (sacred beads) and meditation of the Panchaksara Mantra has left behind him a number of staunch disciples and his Arimalam Samadhi is, to this day, the resort of thousands of Chettiars and other pious devotees,

## SRI APPAYYACHARYA

Sri Appayacharya was born about the year 1830, at Pattamadai. He was the grandson of Pannai Subbaier, a great land-lord and elder brother of P.S. Vengu Aiyer, father of Dr.P.V.Kuppuswami Aiyer.

He had a beautiful complexion and majestic personality. He was tall, stalwart and broad-built.

He was a great scholar in Sanskrit. He was an Anubhava Jnani, a realised sage, a great Bhakta of Lord Siva and was known as Appaya Sivam.

He wrote several books on Religion and Philosophy, and commentaries on Gita, Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, etc.

Late Sri Krishna Sastrigal of Theosophical Society, Adyar, editor of "Heritage", Bombay, was one of his disciples. He published several of Sri Appayacharya's writings in his monthly journal. "Kalyana Kalpataru" had published a short like-sketch of Sri Appayacharya.

Sri Appayacharya was an introvert. He lived in Narayanammalpuram on the banks of Tambaraparani, for several years and spent his time in rigorous meditation. He exercised tremendous spiritual influence over a vast number of people. He avoided publicity and lived in seclusion always. He did not like to come to lime-light. He embraced poverty though his admirers,

disciples and devotees were very rich. Sometime he would go out for Unchavritti and Kirtans. He shone like Lord Siva. His Sanskrit songs touched the hearts of all.

Sri Appayyacharya was a genius like Sri Sankara. He was as reputed as Sri Raja Sastrigal of Mannargudi and Sri Appayya Dikshitar of Advaiapalam, North Arcot District. His knowledge of the sacred scriptures was very profound. People from various quarters came to him to consult on controversial religious points, on Dharma, etc.

He entered into Mahasamadhi at the age of 70, about the year 1900.

Glory to Sri Appayyacharya a genius, a seer, a Bhakta, a sage, a great writer, a poet and a Maha Rishi.

May his blessing be upon you all !



**BOOK THREE**

**OTHER SAINTS**

By

**SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA**



## CHAPTER I

### SANNYASINS

#### VIDYARANYA

The Hindū Empire of Vijayanagar and the cultural kingdom of the Hindu Vedic lore are the temporal and spiritual creations of Sri Vidyaranaya, the twenty-first in the hierarchy of Shankaracharyas, beginning with Sri Adi Shankara-Bhagavadpada.

At the site of Kishkhindha, in a cool cave of Rishyamukha mountain, the great Madhava was rapt in penance to invoke the goddess Bala to bless him to achieve his heart's desire—the regeneration of Hindu culture and the establishment of Hindu sovereignty out of the then existent chaos, lawlessness and misery. He was so steadfast in his tapas that the goddess appeared before him in a trance. But what she told him was that his heart's desire would be fulfilled only in another birth. Whereat the great Yogi took Sanyas, thereby literally taking another birth, and invoked the goddess once again. Tradition has it that for about three hours it rained gold, gems and pearls and that the great Madhava, now turned

Vidyaranya, the Sanyasin, got instructions as to when and how he should found the Hindu Empire.

The site of Anegundi on the northern side of the Tungabhadra was already in existence. It was, therefore, on the southern side of the river around the temple of Viroopaksha that the great saint planned and built up his Vidyanagar. The two shepherd brothers who attended on him during his tapascharya, giving him milk and rendering other necessary services, he made kings by name Hukka and Bukka. His made his own brother a minister, while he himself took care of the general direction of the Empire. So towering was his spiritual personality that he was lovingly known as Nirmamendra. The great mandapa where the Nirmamendra used to sit and perform his spiritual practices may still be seen in the bed of the Tungabhadra at Hampi, eight miles away from Hospet (Bellary District), now a station on the Guntakkal-Bangalore Railway line. Likewise one may see on the southern parikrama of the great Viroopaksha temple the shrine of his Ishta Devata, the goddess Bala. Hampi is in ruins today, as indeed is our great Aryan culture, Vast are the ruins; and the picture that is conjured up of the never-to-be-forgotten Vidyanagar, the creation of Vidyaranya, is almost Himalayan in grandeur.

Witnesses, both Indian and foreign, tell us that the city was a stupendous rectangle, eighteen miles long and ten miles broad. The Tungabhadra was so diverted

into various channels that any corner of the city had access to fresh water. The city-planning was perfect, it is said; the sanitation excellent, trade prosperous and tranquillity exemplary. The citizens were honest and just, polite and hospitable to strangers. The great Chaikrya visited Vijayanagar in her hey-day. The catholic missionary, St. Francis Xavier, was astounded at the greatness of the Hindu kingdom and, despairing of success in his ambitious project of converting the people at large, confined his activities to the fishermen of the West and the Coromandal coasts. The great religious heads of the Ramanuja and the Madhva orders had made the city their main place of stay; for Vidyanagar was easily the fountain-head of civilisation.

Having established this grand city, Nirmamendra retired to Shringeri, the spiritual seat of the Shankaracharyas in the south, (the others being Dwaraka in the West, Badrinath or Jyotirmath in the North and Puri in the East). There he set himself to complete his destined task of elucidating the obscurity of the Vedas. The great Veda Vyas had codified the Vedas in part much as we see them now. Centuries had passed and Hindu valour had practically disappeared. The heathen had not only come on the fold but begun to dominate it. The followers of many ancient Vedic Shakhas had had to run away before the onslaught of the Huns, the Shakas and the Turks. The Mohamedan invaders in their fanaticism and fury were doing away with the best monuments of Hindu art and culture. It was in this

set-up that the Empire of Vijayanagar had risen and secured the people's safety. But the cultural rehabilitation of the country had yet to be brought about, and this the great Vidyaranya sat down in his sixtieth year to achieve. It is said he lived for ninety years thereafter.

Sri Madhava, as the great Vidyaranya was known before assuming Sanyas, was born in 1350 A. D. at Kundiram (Bellary), his father being Mayana, and his mother Sumati. He had two brothers, Sayana, younger than himself and Bodhanatha, the elder. He belonged to Yajurveda, Bodhayanasutra, Bharadvaja-gotra. He entered Brahmacharya in his eighth year and continued in that Ashram for 36 years under his Guru सर्वज्ञविष्णु. In this period he mastered the four Vedas with all their abstruse and esoteric significance. His predecessors in Vedic commentary, Yaska, Bhavaswami and Bhattabhaskara, he followed with masterly precision. The magnitude of his plan for a new commentary made it impossible for one man to cope with it, however gifted he might be. Very wise was he, therefore, in seeking and requisitioning the collaboration of a large number of learned pundits from all parts of India to work under his direction and copy out the manuscripts on palm leaf and distribute them to various cultural centres all over the country. On all such copies the time and place of writing and the author's name (as Sayana-Madhuwayam or Madhveya Vidyaranyam) have been faithfully recorded; the former in Karma-kanda, and the latter in Jnana-kanda commentaries. Sri Vidyaranya, being a Sanyasi,

could not deal directly with the Vedic portion relating to Karma; he got it done, therefore, by his younger brother, Sayanacharya, who remained a householder, punctilious in his practices of Vedic Achara.

The King Bukka or Bukkanna Raja, the faithful disciple of Sri Vidyaranya, requested him to issue a commentary on the four Vedas and placed the whole of the Imperial resources at the disposal of his Guru and minister. Pandits thronged to Vijayanagar in thousands and raised the cultural status of the city. From the grand stone Mandapas of Viroopaksha, Vitthalaswami and Hazar Ramaswami temples in Hampi, we can form some conception of the vast halls where they used to assemble. Imposingly artistic were a number of them, like the Lotus Pavilion, which one may see even today, a lovely structure of lime, mortar and terracotta with not a bit of wood in it. Add to these the many caves, big enough to accommodate thousands, where coolness reigned and great concentration and solitude could be maintained, and you can get an idea of the size of the learned congregations that laboured for the restoration of the lost culture. The Emperor looked to all the material "comforts of the men of learning and thus furthered the Vedic revival. Whereas the previous Bhashyakaras did not arrive at exact conclusions regarding the import of certain Mantras, Vidyaranya made himself precise. For instance, Rudra was defined as any one of the eleven deities of that name, varying in qualification. But Sri Vidyaranya gave a clear and concise connotation to Rudra thus :

रुदुःखः दुःखहन्तुत्वं तद्राचयति यः प्रभुः ।

रुद्र इत्युच्यते तस्माच्छिवः परमकारणम् ॥

Similarly, while describing Usha or the Dawn, Sri Vidyaranya explains the description as applicable to the region of Maha Meru or the Arctic circle, where the day is a matter of six months and the night of another six months. To arrest the layman's interest, he clarifies the meaning of the term Veda emphatically thus :

इष्टप्राप्त्यनिष्टपरिहारपारलौकिकमुपायम् ।

यो ग्रन्थो वेदयति स वेदः ॥

The first Grantha composed by Madhava Vidyaranya is Jaiminiya Nyayamala in Mimamsa. Next he composed Naiyayika Nyayamala and Vedanta. Then he wrote his commentaries on the Taittiriya Samhita of Yajurveda, and on the Brahmanas and Aranyakas of Yajurveda. He then turned to the commentary of Bodhayana Grihya Sutras, obviously to improve on his previous commentator, Bhavaswami.

He wrote commentaries on the Adhvarya Kanda of Yajurveda, on the hymns of the Rigveda, on the melodious Sama Veda and on the Atharva Veda dealing with the details of Yajna. Then he turned to the Dharma Sutras—to Parasara-Smriti—and to Gita Bhashya. He is reputed to have composed a Lexicon like Amara-Kosha. He has composed masterly treatises on Astronomy and on medicine. Of these, however, Gita Bhashya and

Amara Kosha remain yet to be traced.

Vedic scholars of repute testify to Shri Vidyanarany's mastery of grammar, geography, astronomy, medicine, geometry and architecture. The matchless beauty and workmanship of the monumental temples at Shringeri and their secret import amply speak for Shri Vidyanarany's mastery of Shilpa and Mantra Shastras; for, it was he that created the glory that Shringeri is even now. During the destruction of Vijayanagar the Mohamedans burnt Vidyanarany's grand library. When again the Shankaracharyas were obliged to move from Shringeri owing to the confusion resulting from the dismemberment of Vijayanagar after the battle of Talikota at Nasik and elsewhere, many valuable manuscripts were lost including the originals of the above. It may be added as a point of interest and worthy of note, that the Gita was, unlike as at present, a matter of advanced study for Sadhaks who had prepared themselves for it by knowledge and discipline, and not a pocket-volume to be carried by schoolboys, by fashionable ladies and by all sorts of people to be read and interpreted ever so light-heartedly. That is why Vidyanarany's Gita Bhasya remained a closed book. His commentary on the Rig Veda is a marvel, they say, of accurate and wide knowledge. His preface to this commentary is so wonderful that it sharpens the intellect and awakens hidden powers of understanding of the readers. Its standard may be gauged from the

fact that portions of it are prescribed by the University as a text book for advanced students of Sanskrit.

Prof. Max Muller was the first to translate this commentary for the West. Since then it has been rendered into French and German. We can have an idea of this commentary if we bear in mind that it consists of a lakh and a half verses and deals with every conceivable subject under the sun. In composing this, Sri Vidyaranya depended mainly on Yaska's Nirukta and on the interpretations of earlier commentators, Skanda, Narayana, Udgeeta, and Venkita Madhava.

Rigveda and Sri Vidyaranya's commentary thereon have been the subject of careful and manifold research; and like the mighty sea, it yields treasures and continues as mysterious as ever. To edit Sri Vidyaranys's commentary on the Rig Veda alone it took our modern scholars 25 years. One can imagine the superhuman intellect, memory and concentration of the great commentator, when we take into account the added consideration that his commentary on the four Vedas was all done without the aid of any of our modern labour-saving devices.

Sri Vidyaranya is the one great soul that has laid bare the mystery and obscurity of the Vedas and enabled later generations to taste our ancient Aryan culture and lead lofty, honourable lives. From Ujjain in the north to

Kanyakumari in the south, from Dwaraka in the west to Puri in the east were established enlightened colonies of learned Brahmins, especially on the banks of the great rivers, Ganga, Narmada, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri and Tamraparni.

The Vijayanagar kings established contacts with other rulers all over the country, distributed manuscripts of Veda Bhashya, arranged for the safe conduct of pilgrims and learned men all over, made learning free, established university centres and built new temples and and Sarais on a grand scale and replenished the funds of the ancient ones. For example, the Ambika temples at Kollur Mookambika in north Kanara and at Kanya Kumari in the extreme south of Malabar received wonderful contributions of gold and jewels from Vijayanagar. On a pendant of costly gems and pearls in Mookambika temple is the name of Bukkanna Raja inscribed in red stone. The central piece of this pendant is a marvellous green circular bit ten inches in diameter and an inch in thickness. In Kanya Kumari temple one finds the name of Atchyuta Raya inscribed on a copper plate affixed to the Dhwaja-Sthambha (the God's Flag-staff) as offering his homage to the goddess Kanya, or the Eternal Virgin. It is a matter of local knowledge that about fifty years back the temple treasury was plundered by Kabul invaders. Elderly residents of the locality who have been told of the jewels of the Kanya Kumari temple before the plunder, testify to their enormous cost, variety and

beauty. Even now the nosescrew on the goddess Kanya is of so dazzling a lustre that it arrests even the attention of mariners far away from the coast, for which reason the Eastern Gate of the Temple remains practically closed. The Darshan is the only exception.

It is more than probable that Vijayanagar contributed to Kanyakumari's riches.

Colonies of learned Brahmins were established by Vijayanagar kings and governors in several points in Kanara, in Malabar, as for instance in Palghat with its eighteen villages; on the banks of the Kaveri, at Bhavani, Kattuputtur and elsewhere. As is seen from a copper plate still preserved in the family of a great Yajurveda Dikshita there, Kattuputtur was given over as a freehold by Krishnadevaraya.

These details are mentioned only to trace their glory to the Nirmamendra whose cultural progeny we are. It may not be given to many of us to read and follow his Rig Veda Bhashya, his grand treatise on grammar, his Mantra Shastra expositon on his Ishtadevata Bala, by name Vidyarnavam, his .Brahma Gita embodying the abstruse ideas of the Upanishads, his Saubhasya Ratnakaram on the devotional practices of Shakti worship. But it is our duty as his cultural children to drink deep the more easily accessible fountains of his wisdom such as his commentary on Pancha Dashi, his Shankara Vijayam or

the life story of Adishankara Bhagavadpada, his exposition of Parashara Smriti and, lastly, his preface to the Rigveda Bhashya—so singular an achievement in literature.

Let us not despair that we have fallen to the present degeneracy that our cultural structure lies shattered like the Hampi ruins, that our store of riches has been plundered like that of Somnath, that between us and our old Aryan forefathers there yawns a gulf which the labours of the historian can but inadequately bridge. And where is the historian to-day proud of his culture and tradition disciplined in the art of living, wide in understanding and sympathetic towards the common man—as our memorable ancients say.

It is difficult for us to have a correct understanding of our religion, art and culture amidst the modern discordant notes, unless we discipline ourselves for the battle in our body against anger, pride, passion and lust, unless we take to simple ways of living and to spiritual perfection by observing Brahmacharya, Ahimsa, Satyam and Tapascharya and corporate responsibility as in our ancient Ashramas.

Glory to our Great Acharyas ever and ever !

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## SRI RAGHAVENDRA SWAMIGAL OF MANTRALAYA

India has produced great Mahatmas in no small number. Their biographies are often being written and re-written by many. But what for? The sacred lives and teachings of such great men are not mere stories for filling up the pages in newspapers, but they are irresistible appeals for keeping alive the ideals they preached. Their physical sufferings and marvellous achievements have a miraculous effect in influencing the minds of men to move in the path of Dharma.

One of such great Mahatmas was Sri Raghavendra Tirtha Swami of the 17th century, whose memorable day of disappearance from this mundane world is celebrated in Sravana Krishna Dvitiya, every year.

### Search For Guru

Venkata Bhatta, later known as Sri Raghavendra Tirtha was the last son of Thimmanna Bhatta of Bhuvanagiri village in South India. He was under the care of his elder brother. His *upanayanam* was performed in his 7th year and he was sent to Madura for preliminary studies in Sanskrit. He was extra-ordinarily quick in mastering the subjects, became well-versed in them and gained a good command of languages. His life up to this was not marked by anything remarkable or worth mentioning.

In his search for an enlightened Guru for the higher studies in Vedanta, Venkata Bhatta approached the celebrated saint Sri Sudhindra Tirtha at Kumbakonam whose increasing reputation in those days attracted one and all. Venkata Bhatta surrendered himself at the feet of his Guru who gladly welcomed him. The ideal Guru often taking note of the extra-ordinary qualities and capacity in Venkata Bhatta, praised the Lord for having blessed him with such a rare disciple, who, the Guru thought, would one day become a great Acharya Purusha.

One midnight, the Guru secretly inspected the retiring hall of his disciples to find out the truth in the charges levelled by some of the disciples against his pet Venkata Bhatta, that he always wasted his time, never studied the texts and so on. There he found his disciples in slumber comfortably on varieties of luxurious beds and pillows. There was no lamp, no book nor any of the things to indicate that they had been studying in the night. To his surprise, he found that Venkata Bhatta was missing in that group. He hurried anxiously in search of his pet. The great and aged Swamiji's heart almost melted with pity for his young student when he noticed him lying in a corner. His bed was the Mother Earth, his pillow was his own hand, and he had no covering to protect him from the cold wind. By the side of him there was a huge heap of dry leaves (which he had burnt for the light to study, and a copy of *Nyaya Sudha* with a bundle of palmyrah writing leaves.

### The Commentary

The soft-hearted Guru could no longer bear the sight of such a heart-rending spectacle. The extreme humility of the young genius moved the Guru very much. As it was too chill, the Guru took off his *Kashayam* and with that he covered the body of the sleeping boy and retired to his quarters taking the palmyrah leaves with him. He was curious to know what was written in it and when he leisurely looked into it he was wonderstruck to find that it was a beautiful commentary on *Nyaya Sudha*. His eyes shed tears of joy out of emotion and his heart proved helpless to arrest its overflow.

*Nyaya Sudha* is a great scholarly work of a very high order on Dwaita Vedanta composed by the illustrious saint Sri Jaya Tirtha Swami of the 14th century. It is too hard a nut to crack even for intellectual giants and absolutely unthinkable for the young students. Hence it is no exaggeration that the Guru's rejoicings went out of bounds when he saw his young disciple's independent commentary on the very work which the student was yet learning under him. To show his appreciation, the Guru convened a large congregation, introduced the young author to the public and named his distinguished work *Sudha Parimala*.

### Call To Sanyasa

The call to take *Sanyasa* came to Venkata Bhatta from his Guru Sri Sudhindra. As he declined in the first instance, the tradition says, Goddess Saraswati appeared

in his dream and blessed him with *Vairagya Gyana* which made him finally accept the great call. He received the initiation from his Guru who blessed him with the name Sri Raghavendra Tirtha. Thus he entered the highest order of the Brahmanical law in 1623 A.D. at Tanjore. He realised the ideal of his mission and spent his life in sacred service of the Lord and for the benefit of humanity. Preaching the power of pure *Shakti* was the paramount purpose of his birth. For this purpose, he forgot all his bodily comforts and conveniences. He visited many places in the country and performed many wonders.

#### Averted Famine

It is traditionally affirmed that once in the kingdom of Tanjore, famine was precariously getting intensified and victimising the subjects and the state granary had become almost empty. The king tried in all possible ways and means to save his subjects, but in vain. He heard the fame of the great saint and as a last resort he ran to him, prostrated at his feet and begged if he could help to drive away the famine. The Swami readily proceeded to his capital, and at the State Granary wrote the *beejakshara* "Sri" in Sanskrit, with his own hand. He stayed in the state for some days writing this daily and also performed japa. Within a short time, there was a heavy downpour of rain, averting the famine and producing a bumper harvest.

### His Great Works

Sri Raghavendra's scholarly contributions to Indian philosophy in general and to Dwaita Vedanta in particular are admired even to this day with universal applause. He wrote 46 works of an illustrious nature in such an impressive and telling language as to dispel the doubts and illusions from the minds of many. For Upanishads he has written beautiful Khandarthas. He is famous for his enlightening Tippanies (commentaries) on various works.

Bhakti combined with *gyana* was the central theme of his teachings. In the *Raghavendra Stotra*, he has been referred to as Sarva Tantra Swatantra by one of the great men of his time.

### Merges in God

After adorning the pontifical throne for 47 years, Sri Raghavendra went to Bellary district. On the bank of river Tunga Bhadra he asked his disciples to build a Brindavana (tomb). On a day in 1671 A.D. this great Mahatma came round that Brindavana singing a melodious song in praise of Lord Sri Krishna and entered into it in flesh and blood in the presence of thousands of men and women with their eyes filled with tears and their hearts were heavy with grief. The Brindavana is situated in the Mantralaya nearly 9 miles from Tunga Bhadra station of M.&S.M.Railway. He had told the people that he would live in Brindavana for 700 years and would give relief for those who approach him for blessings.

**Proof Of Eternity**

Even to this day he is worshipped by his devotees as almost a Kula Daiva. Men of different schools of thought are daily flocking to this sacred place. They do *seva* to his Brindavana and return to their homes with great joy and immense relief. Is this not enough to prove that he is still alive?

If, in spite of all these facts, a modern critic is still seen to indulge in ironic smile over the belief. Thanks to Sri Raghavendra, the world is free to-day to refer to a notification in the Madras District Gazetteer, Volume I, Chapter XV, Bellar District, Adoni Taluk, page 213, reprinted in 1916. The notification says, that Sri Raghavendra emanated from the tomb and conversed with a foreigner Sir Thomas Munro, who was the Chief Collector of the region. This incident is stated to have taken place in 1900 A.D. when the latter was personally inspecting the locality of the Brindavana in connection with the case to resume the endowments granted to Brindavana. He is said to have quashed the proposal to resume the endowments.

## SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI

Mool Sankar was the name of Swami Dayananda before he became a Sanyasi. He was born in 1824 at Mervi, the capital of a very small state in Gujerat, Kathiawar. Amba Sankar was his father. He was a rich Brahmin Zamindar and banker with an intense religious turn of mind.

When Mool Sankar was five years old he was taught the Devanagari alphabet. He learnt by heart select Slokas from sacred writings. He was invested with the sacred thread in his eighth year.

The seed of spiritual awakening was first sown in his mind on the night of Sivaratri in his fourteenth year.

His sister and uncle died. Mool Sankar had a terrible shock. This showed the transitory character of life and the vanity of human aspirations. He realised that life in this earth was only a fleeting show.

He wanted to go to Banaras to study Sanskrit literature and sacred Sanskrit books but his father totally refused. He was sent to a Pathashala which was in a neighbouring village.

The father of Mool Sankar arranged for his son's marriage. Mool Sankar ran away from his house. He did not want to get married. He felt that marriage was a great net and entanglement.

He reached a village named Sayala. He met here a Brahmachari, the head of a religious sect. Mool Sanker requested the Brahmachari to admit him into the order of Naishtika Brahmacharya. Mool Sanker was given ochre robes and renamed as Suddha Chaitanya.

In the course of his wanderings he came to the religious fair held at Sidhapur every year. There he met a Vairagi, who was an acquaintance of his father. The vairagi at once wrote to his father about the whereabouts of Mool Sanker. Amba Sanker came at once to Siddhapur and met his son in a temple. He was very much enraged when he saw his son in ochre robe. He tore away his son's cloth into pieces, and broke the begging bowl. He was given new clothes and kept under the watch of a number of servants. The servants fell fast asleep at night. Mool Sanker ascended a big Peepal tree and kept himself concealed all night. The father and the servants searched for Mool Sanker but could not find him. They returned home.

Mool Sanker went to Ahmedabad and Baroda. Afterwards he went to a place on the bank of the holy Narbada. Here he studied several books on Vedanta under one Sanyasin, Paramahansa Paramananda. He had perfect faith in the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul.

Swami Poornananda Saraswati initiated Mool Sanker into the order of Sanyasa. His name was changed to

Swami Dayananda Saraswati. He was now only twenty-four years.

He spent the next twelve years of his life in wanderings, pilgrimages, study, tapas and practice of Yoga. He visited all the sacred places in Northern India. He developed strong endurance now on account of wanderings. He starved and slept in the jungles.

He proceeded to Mathura at the age of 36 and met Swami Virajananda, a famous Sanyasin, a great scholar in Sanskrit, a Panjabi by birth, who was blind on account of an attack of small pox. Swami Virajananda spent much of his time in meditation. He was very harsh and strict.

The connection of Swami Dayananda with Swami Virajananda decided his career. The great work which Swami Dayananda did was due to the inspiring personality of Swami Virajananda. Swami Virajananda beat Dayananda several times.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati served his Guru diligently, fetched water for him from a great distance, swept his room and washed his clothes also. He lived with his Guru for  $2\frac{3}{4}$  years.

At last the parting day came. Dayananda with a few cloths in his hand, approached his Guru and said "My adorable Guru, I am a poor man and have nothing

more to give." Swami Virajananda said, "I am anxious that you should part with something that you possess." Swami Dayananda replied "All that is mine, my very life is at your service, O adorable Master-" Virajananda said, "Make a proper use of the education you have acquired. Disseminate your knowledge everywhere. Remove darkness. The Hindus have forgotten what their true religion is. Teach them the true Vedic religion."

Dayananda bowed to his Guru with great reverence and took a vow that he would dedicate his life to the cause of the revival of the Vedic religion. He took leave of his Guru and at once started his work.

He proceeded to Agra and delivered some lectures. Then he marched to Gwalior and Jaipore. The Maharaja of Jaipore welcomed the Swami with great reverence and enthusiasm.

He delivered lectures in Hardwar, Banaras and Calcutta. He met Devendranath Tagore and Babu Keshab Chandra Sen. He delivered lectures in Sanskrit and Hindi. He had great opposition from the orthodox pundits as he spoke against idol worship.

He delivered lectures at Allahabad and Bombay. In Bombay he established the First Arya Samaj. Thereupon Swami Dayananda went to Poona and delivered a series of lectures in the Hindu Club building. The Pundits

condemned him and his teachings. He was even attacked but his life was saved by the timely help of the police.

Thereupon he proceeded to Punjab. He achieved great success in Lahore. He established Samajas in almost every important town in Punjab.

Then he went to United Provinces and Rajputana and did propaganda there. Maharaja Jaswanta Singh of Jodhpore had then fallen into evil ways. He was under the influence of a common woman. He made the Maharaja leave the woman. The woman poisoned the Swami through his food. He passed away in Ajmere on the 30th October 1883, on the night of Deepawali.

Swami Dayananda as a logician had no rival, and as a debater he had no equal. His power of reasoning was marvellous. He was a great orator.

#### Teachings Of Swami Dayananda

1. The source of all true knowledge is the Supreme Being.
2. God is all Truth and all Beauty. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He is formless, just, benevolent, unborn, endless, infinite, unchanging, beginningless, support of all, undecaying, imperishable, fearless, eternal, the one designer and director of the entire universe. He alone must be adored.

3. The Veda is the scripture of true knowledge. It is the paramount duty of every Aryan to learn, teach, hear and preach the Veda.
4. Accept Truth and remove untruth.
5. Do your actions in accordance with Dharma after a thorough investigation of right and wrong.
6. The main object of the Arya Samaj is to do good to the world, to promote the physical, social and spiritual good of every being.
7. Your conduct towards all should be guided by love, righteousness and justice.
8. Destroy nescience and promote physical and spiritual service.
9. Look for your good in the good of all.
10. Abide by the laws of Society which are best calculated to promote the well-being of all.

Swami Dayananda's "Satyarth Prakash" (exposition of the meaning of Truth) is a well-known book. It contains the teachings of Swami Dayananda. —

The Arya Samaj has done great social service to India. Schools, colleges and orphanages have cropped up in several centres. The Kangri Gurukul and D.A.V. College, Dehra Dun are very good institutions. Swami Sraddhananda, a disciple of Swami Dayananda developed the

Kangri Gurukul. He started the Suddha movement, which reclaimed those who became Christians and Mohamedans.

He was a man of independent thinking. He had the courage to repudiate openly whatever appeared irrational to him. He had a dynamic personality.

His deep spiritual yearning and intense thirst for Truth made him renounce all worldly interests and devote himself to the study of the Vedas and systematic moral and spiritual self-discipline.

He wrote a learned commentary on the Rig Veda.

Swami Sraddhananda was for a long time the leader of Arya Samaj. His saintly character, dynamic personality, all-embracing heart, intense love for society and the nation, extra-ordinary power of organisation, contributed greatly to the expansion of the activities of the Samaj. He died a martyr's death in 1926 at the age of 71.

## SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA

Swami Rama Tirtha, the direct descendant of Gosain Tulsi Das, the immortal author of the widely read Hindi *Ramayana*, was born in 1873, at Muraliwala, in the district of Gujranwala, Punjab.

Rama Tirtha was a very bright student, a genius, possessing unusual intelligence, contemplative nature and an intrinsic love for mathematics and solitude. He topped the list in B.A. and took his M.A. degree in Mathematics, a subject in which he was exceptionally bright.

For two years, he was Professor of Mathematics in the Lahore Forman Christian College, and acted as a Reader for a short time in the Lahore Oriental College.

In the year 1900, Rama Tirtha went to the forest, and soon became a Sanyasi. He went to America and Japan and thrilled the Americans and Japanese with his inspiring and soul-elevating speeches. In Egypt he was accorded a hearty welcome by the Mohamedans, to whom he delivered a lecture in Persian in their mosque. He was ever-cheerful and brilliant with eyes beaming with divine lustre and joy. He was perfectly at home in Persian, English, Hindi, Urdu and Sanskrit literatures.

He was a great ascetic and an enlightened mystic.

He practised Yoga on the banks of the river Ravi and later he lived in the forests of Brahmapuri, on the banks of the river Ganges, five miles away from Rishikesh and attained Self-realisation.

Under the holy guidance of Sri R.S.Narayana Swami, a direct disciple of Swami Rama Tirtha, the Ramatirtha Publication League has been established at Lucknow. Every lover and admirer of Sri Rama Tirtha's soul-inspiring teachings, owes a deep debt of gratitude to Sri Narayana Swamiji and the League for taking immense pains in making Rama Tirtha's works available to the world.

#### The Beacon Star Ram

Swami Rama Tirtha is one of the brilliant stars that sheds its eternal light in the firmament of Adhyatmic wisdom. He infused in the minds of people a new joy, a happy conviction that it is not for nothing we live in a miserable earth, and that we do not, after a long struggle in the sea of life, reach a waterless desert where our sorrows would be repeated. He lived practical philosophy, and through that showed to the world that it is possible to rejoice in the bliss of the Self even in this very life, and that every one can partake of this bliss if one sincerely strives for it.

Swami Ram was an exemplary figure in the field of of Vedantic life. He was a practical, bold Vedantin; he lived a dynamic life in the spirit of the Self. Very

high were his ideals, sublime were his views, and perennial, spontaneous was his love. He was Divinity personified and love-incarnate. He is ever alive as a dynamic soul-force, ever shedding the spiritual effulgence in the heart of every seeker after Truth. His teachings are inspiring, elevating and illuminating; a fountain of his intuitive experiences.

To-day he is not present amongst us in his mortal coil but he is truly ever-alive, eternal and imperishable, ever shining as a beacon-star in the spiritual firmament of the world. He had the highest realization of the Satchidananda as the all-inclusive Bliss-supreme. And it is an explanation of the apparent contradictions of life on earth. The ancient sages and modern saints have proved this ineffable nature of the Supreme, not by logical proofs of perception and knowledge, but by actual experience of it which cannot be communicated to others for want of means. And Swami Rama Tirtha was one among such Experiencers of the Ultimate Bliss.

#### **Swami Rama And His Teachings. Their Value To The Modern Man To-Day**

Sri Swami Rama Tirtha is one of the brightest jewels of India's genius. Rama belongs to that prophetic group of inspired seers who rang up the curtain of Indian Renaissance and ushered in the era of a strongly positive aggressive and all-conquering Spirituality. His advent into Bharatavarsha was potent with a great significance to man in modern times. His personality, permeated

with the bliss of his inner realisation, came as a gush of cleansing and energising breeze which blew away the musty accretion of superstitions, queer misconceptions and wrong beliefs that had covered up the art of practising religion in everyday life, an art our ancients knew well. The immense vitality and exuberance of Rama's spiritual personality infused in a marvellous manner a new vigour and fresh energy into the waning truths of Vedantic living and he has left a unique legacy for the present age. It is an invaluable legacy to accept which and to act up to which would mean the immediate victory over the tyranny of fear, diffidence, weakness and misery that stalks upon the land to-day. For Rama has left the great legacy of Lion-heartedness. He practised and propounded the art of real fearlessness and infinite Self-reliance, the inner strength of Atman and bubbling cheerfulness. By his life and laughter Rama tells you how to make misery vanish like a mist by radiating the sun-shine of inner bliss. "Be fearless" was Rama's motto.

From Rama India has inherited the dual gems of Vedantic Boldness and Spiritual Patriotism. The spiritual patriotism of Rama is something unique and grand. Every son and daughter of India should absorb it and make it his and her own. Swami Rama emphatically declared that if you must have intense and real patriotism then you must deify the Motherland, behold Bharatavarsha as the living Goddess. In Swami Rama Tirtha's words "If you must realise unity with God, realise first

your unity with the Whole Nation, Let this intense feeling of identity with every creature within this land be throbbing in every fibre of your frame" said Rama. "Let every son of India stand for the Whole, seeing that the Whole of India is embodied in every son. When streams, stones and trees are personified and sacrificed in India, why not sanctify, deify the great Mother that cradles you and nourishes you? Through Prana-Pratishtha you vitalise an idol of stone or an effigy of clay. How much more worth while were it to call forth the inherent glory and evoke fire and life in the Deity that is Mother India?" Thus to Rama the National Dharma of Love to the Motherland was a spiritual Dharma of Virat Prem. Let every Indian to-day fervently take this LEGACY into his heart. By this act show your real appreciation of and gratitude to the great Seer. Thus can you glorify his life and his teachings. Rama had great vision of the future. May India realise it by her sons putting into practice Rama's lofty legacy.

The highest realization of patriotism, Rama believed, lay fully in identifying yourselves with the land of your birth. Remember his words, "TUNE YOURSELF IN LOVE WITH YOUR COUNTRY AND PEOPLE". Be a spiritual soldier. Lay down your life in the interest of your land abnegating the little ego, and having thus loved the country, feel anything and the country will feel with you. March and the country will follow. This indeed is the practical Vedanta.

The teachings of Rama Tirtha are peculiarly direct and forceful. They are unique. He did not teach any particular Yoga or Sadhana or propound any abstract philosophical theory. He taught the actual living of Vedanta, of Yoga and Sadhana. This he taught by his own personal example. In himself he embodied an exposition of illumined living. Thus Rama Tirtha's very personality itself preached and taught as much as did any of his innumerable discourses and lectures. He delivered to crowded audiences from platforms that ranged from Tokyo to Toronto.

To the West, Swami Rama appeared not merely as a wise man of the East but as the Wisdom of the East come in tangible form. He was a blissful being inebriated with the ecstasy of Spiritual Consciousness. And his Bliss was infectious. His glance flashed forth Vedanta. His smile radiated the joy of the Spirit. Vedanta streamed forth in his inspired utterance and his whole life; every action, gesture and movement vibrated with the thrill of Vedantic Consciousness.

He demonstrated how Vedanta may be lived. His life was an expression of the Supreme art of Living Life in all its richness of Vision and fullness of Joy. He presented Vedanta not so much as a knowing and realising but as a BECOMING and BEING. It was Swami Rama Tirtha's unique distinction that he expounded Vedanta as a supreme yet simple art of living. He did not try to take people to Vedanta but he

took Vedanta to the common man. Swami Rama Tirtha took Vedanta into the quiet homes, into the busy offices, into the crowded streets and into the noisy markets of the western world.

Both to the East and to the West therefore Swami Rama's life has been a boon and a blessing. For India he vivified vedanta with the vitality of his own inspired life and shining example. He shook India out of fantasy, superstition and misconception; he shocked America to wakefulness and awareness to the intrinsic worth of the practicality of Atmic living. He revealed how the central secret of all lofty activity lay in attunement with the Divine Law of Oneness, harmony and bliss.

To rise above the petty self and act impersonally—this was the key to Divine living. His call to his countrymen was: "May you wake up to your oneness with Life, Light and Love (Satchit-Ananda) and immediately the Central Bliss will commence springing forth from you in the shape of happy heroic work and both wisdom and virtue. This is inspired life; this is your birth-right."

To the Americans Rama taught the way of perfect morality and total abstinence. Keeping the body in active struggle and the mind in rest and loving abstinence, means salvation from sin and sorrow, right here in this very life. Active realisation of at-one-ment with the All allows us a life of balanced recklessness. This sums up Rama's message to the land of the Dollar.

His brother forced Krishnamoorthy to marry but the latter refused with a determination.

### **Finds a Guru**

He gave up his job, and turned his steps towards the North in search of a Guru. At Banaras he met Swami Dakshinamoorthy and stayed with him as his disciple for 3 years. He studied Vedanta thoroughly under him. He served a silent Muni in Banaras for six months.

Therefrom Krishnamoorthy went to a cave above the Bana Tirtha near Papanasam, Tinnevely, District wherein he saw a radiant Sanyasi, the Avadhutha Sadguru Brahmendra Saraswati, commonly known as the Judge Swamigal.

### **His Hardships and Initiation**

In order to test Krishnamoorthy, the Swami threw stones at him. He bore everything with patience. He even supplied stones to the Swamigal for throwing. The Swami found out that Krishnamoorthy was quite ripe for initiation.

According to the directions of the Swami, Krishna moorthy went to his house at Kanappettai, on the full-moon day in the month of June 1891. He stayed with his mother for 3 hours. His clothes fell down of their own accord. He took Avadhutashram at once.

In short Swami Rama's thrilling life is a flashing example of rare Prem and a Divine Spontaneity. Listen! here Rama's voice is whispering, "You have simply to shine as the Soul of All, as the Source of Light, as the Spring of Delight, O Blessed One! and energy, life activity will naturally begin to radiate from you. The flower blooms and Lo! fragrance begins to emanate of itself." Awake India! respond to this Call of Rama. Realise the Bliss that is Yourself. Come now, live the life in the Atman. From this moment let Rama enter into your heart and animate your actions and inspire your actions and inspire your very life! May his Divine Spirit vivify and raise India to her pristine Glory and Vedantic Grandeur! Live in OM!

## **SRI SWAMI SWAYAMPRAKASA BRAHMENDRA SARASWATI**

### **Birth and Parentage**

Krishnamoorthy was the previous name of Swami Swayamprakasa Brahmendraji. He was born of Ramaswami Sastrigal, a pious Vedic scholar, a poor but respectable Brahmin, and Janaki a woman of high-souled purity, in the village of Kalpattu in the district of South Arcot, on Tuesday, the 28th of November 1871.

### **Education**

Swami Brahmendraji was educated in three places: Tiruvidai-marudur, Kumbakonam and Trivandrum. He passed the Matriculation Examination and took to the study of Sanskrit in right earnest. He studied under Bala Saraswati Bhatta, Sri Narayana Sastrigal, an erudite scholar. He studied afterwards Tamil poetry. Swamiji had a wonderful, retentive memory. He quoted long passages with proper contexts and comments with perfect ease.

### **Profession**

He became a School Master in the neighbouring village for some time. Thereupon he joined the Settlement Department as a clerk on a monthly salary of Rs. 50/-.

### Life as an Avadhoota

Swami Swayamprakasa Brahmendra Saraswati roamed about here and there. He ate what he could get at when he was hungry and took rest when he was tired.

He visited Nerur in the District of Trichinopoly, where the Samadhi of Sadasiva Brahma remains. He wandered through the various villages in the district of Tanjore. He remained in a cave at Tiruvannamalai for some months.

He made a tour all over India. He went to Badrinath also.

As he was nude, the police people locked him up, but he was released by Krishnaswami, a prominent advocate.

He was poisoned. His hair and beard were burnt. He was tempted by women of ill-repute brought by wicked men. He was dragged along the streets in the hot sun, with a rope tied around his waist. He proceeded to Sendamangalam and wandered in the Kolli hills. He chose a small hillock in the village of Sendamangalam, Salem, Dist., for his abode and performance of penance. Sri K. Sundaram Chetti, a retired High Court Judge, served the Swami with faith and devotion.

Swami Brahmendra was a living example of spiritual eminence. He practised the severe austerities of "Avadhuta Asramam". Many were his physical sufferings on account of his nudity and phenomenal was his patience at the gibes and sneers of wordly-minded, ignorant youths. Early in life he abandoned the pleasures and comforts of the world. He braved the razor path of Nivritti Marga with a burning desire for Self-realisation. He pursued the course under the blessings of his Sadguru, Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra Saraswati Swamigal of Pudukottai, Trichinopoly Dist with unabated vigour.

He was a spiritual guide for a large number of disciples. Men and women and children have been the recipients of his benediction.

In order to infuse devotion and piety into the hearts of the people, the Swami ji wanted to instal an idol of Sri Dattatreya in the Ashram. While the Swamiji was living, his devoted disciple Swami Sankarananda, in his excessive love and reverence for the Swamiji, took immense pains to build a temple over the hillock, in the Ashram, for installing the idol of Dattatreya, and also the marble statue of the Swamiji. The marble statue of the Swamigal and the idol of Lord Dattatreya in that two-storeyed temple reveal the marvellous

ingenuity of the artist who prepared them. This attractive temple on the hillock, with its calm and inspiring surroundings, and the improved Ashram owe their existence and present charming appearance to the strenuous, indefatigable efforts and remarkable patience and ability of Swami Sankarananda.

The Guhalaya there is built on the Sanyasikaradu or Sanyasikundu. The hillock is called as Dattagiri now. This temple, and the Guhalaya of Sendamangalam will flourish as a lasting monument, reminding the people of the glory and greatness of the holy Sage, who entered into Mahasamadhi in the month of December 1948.

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## CHAPTER II

### MODERN SAINTS

#### BULLA SHAH

Bulla Shah was a Sufi saint. He was a celebrated saint of Punjab. He was the disciple of the Sufi saint Miyamir.

Sufism in its philosophy comes nearest to Vedanta. There is the relationship of "Lover and the Beloved." A Sufi is free from fanaticism. He is calm, serene and tranquil like a Vedantin. He is a sage. He is full of love, kindness and mercy.

Bulla Shah was a Padusha of the town of Bulkh near Bukhara. He was a married man. He had abundant wealth and property. But he did not lead the life of sensual indulgence. Worldly riches and possessions did not attract him. He had no charm for mundane things. He was full of dispassion and discrimination. He led a simple life. His thoughts were sublime and lofty. He was yearning for the vision of God. He longed for absolute freedom, perfection and perennial joy.

The clarion call had come to him. The fire of spirituality was kindled in his heart. He found the hollowness of mundane life. He realised fully that everything here is transitory and fleeting. He was longing for Satsang and the company of saints and sages. The fire of renunciation was ignited.

He heard of the glory and greatness of saint Miyamir. He at once installed his young son as the Badusha of Bulkh. He marched towards the cottage of the saint, which was three miles off to the east of Lahore, with his hundred attendants and one minister. When he entered the abode of the saint, his love for the Lord increased. His heart was filled with devotion and love. He longed to have Darshan of the saint. He implored for an interview with the saint. It was refused.

Bulla Shah resolved to surrender himself to the lotus feet of the saint. He asked his attendants and minister to return to Bulakh. He distributed away all the wealth he brought. He wrapped himself with a blanket in the biting winter and became a Sufist fakir.

Bulla Shah of regal splendour embraced poverty. He became a penniless pauper. He now beseeched for the saint's Darshan. Miyamir sent word that the time had not come and asked him to go to a fakir who resided on the banks of the river Ravi, and discipline himself rigorously for a period of twelve years and then come to him.

Bulla Shah implicitly obeyed. He proceeded to the banks of Ravi and found the fakir. He took sattwic food and practised Yoga strenuously for twelve years.

He purified his mind and removed all evil traits. He filled his heart with divine virtues. He had now one-pointed, sharp, subtle mind to grasp the Truth. The fakir said, "Bulla Shah! You are ripe now. Proceed to meet Miyamir. He will gladly give you Darshan and give you further spiritual instructions. Be quick. Tarry not."

Bulla Shah proceeded at once to the abode of saint Miyamir. The saint received Bulla Shah with affection and love, and initiated him into the mysteries of Truth and blessed him. He found in Bulla Shah a fit instrument to carry out his mission for the welfare and supreme good of mankind.

Once the Maulavis asked Bulla Shah who he was. Bulla Shah replied "Anal haq"—"I am He". This enraged the Maulavis. The Maulavis arrested Bulla Shah and took him at once to the Nawab for punishment. The Nawab found out that Bulla Shah was a saint and released him.

At another time Bulla Shah declared himself as the Emperor. The Maulavis became very indignant. They took him to the Nawab. Bulla Shah made the Nawab

understood that the empire was that of the Self which is Infinite, boundariless and eternal. The Nawab was fully convinced of the spiritual greatness and splendour of the saint. He declared that no one should interfere and disturb the great saint and if any one violated his order, he would be punished severely.

Bulla Shah's verses contain the fundamentals of Adwaita Vedanta.

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## GOSWAMI TULSIDAS

Sri Goswami Tulsidas was born in the village of Rajapur in the district of Banda near Prayag. His father was a learned Saryuparina Brahmin by name Atmaram. Atmaram's wife's name was Hushi. In the year Samvat 1554 Sravan Sukla Saptami (1497 A.D.) in the Abhukta Moola star the blessed couple begot a child of inexplicable beauty and splendour. The child never cried at the time of birth. He had his 32 teeth at the time of birth, in tact. He remained in the mother's womb for full 12 months. At the time of birth the child repeated Ram Ram. His features at the time of birth were like those of a boy of 5 years. Seeing this peculiar boy the parents had their own misgivings in their minds and thought it was a very bad omen. Hushi entrusted the care of the child to her maid-servant, who took the child to his grandfather's house. The name of the maid-servant was Chuniya. After two days Hushi left her mortal coil and reached the Lord's abode. Chuniya took very great care of the child. The child was named Rambola or Tulsiram. He was known by these names in his childhood. When Rambola was 5 years of age, Chuniya also left him alone and merged herself in the Lord.

By the will of Lord Siva, Rambola was looked after by Swami Naraharyananda, disciple of Sri Swami Anantanandaji of Ramsail. Sri Swami Naraharyananda took him to Ayodhya and in his seventh year invested

him with the sacred thread. To the astonishment of all, Rambola repeated the Gayatri untaught. Sri Narahariswami initiated Rambola in the Ramtaraka mantra and put him to studies in Ayodhya. Rambola excelled all. His intelligence was something marvellous. He never learnt a lesson for a second time, and it was got by heart. Then both the Guru and disciple went to Sookra Kshetra (modern Soro). There Rambola heard from his Guru the story of Sri Rama the glorious Ramayana. Rambola then came to Banaras and learnt the entire Vedas including the Vedangas from Sri Sanatanji. He was then running his fifteenth year. He then took leave of his Guru and returned to his own place and finding that there was none of his own family, he settled there. He read out to his villagers the glorious story of Sri Rama.

In his 29th year Sri Tulsidasji married Buddhimati. He was very much attached to his wife. Sri Tulsidasji begot of Buddhimati a beautiful son by name Tarak. Sri Tulsidas was passionately attached to his wife. He could not bear even a day's separation from her. One day Buddhimati left for her father's house without his knowledge. Her brother had come to take her to his house. Sri Tulsidasji also followed her unable to bear her separation. When she found her husband also following her, Buddhimati said, "What! If you have half as much love towards Rama that you have for this fleshy body of mine you would have attained

Him by now." These words of Buddhimati made a very deep impression in his mind. He at once left the place and turned his steps towards Prayag. He put on the garb of a Sadhu and started on pilgrimage. He visited Banaras and various other places. He spent 14 years as a Parivrajak roaming about from place to place. During his wanderings he met Kakabhusundi near Manasarovar lake.

He then returned and settled in Banaras. Here he began to conduct Katha of Srimad Ramayana. While returning from answering calls of nature, Tulsidas used to throw the water that was left in his pot at the root of a tree which was possessed by a spirit. One day the spirit appeared before him and said, "O Man! You have fed me with water for a long time. I am pleased with you. Ask for a boon from me." Tulsidas replied, "Let me have Darshan of Sri Rama." Then the spirit said, "Go to the Hanuman temple in Chitrakut. There Hanuman comes in the form of a leper to hear the Ramayana Katha. Get hold of him. He will help you to have Darshan of Sri Ram." Then Tulsidasji went to Chitrakut.

Tulsidasji soon reached Chitrakut and fixed his camp there. One day he met the leper and by his instructions was able to have Lord Rama's Darshan. The first day he had darshan of two young men riding on two horses. They were Sri Rama and Lakshmana.

But Tulsidasji could not recognise them. Hanuman told him the secret and again the next time he had Bhagavat, Darshana. In 1607 Samvat he had again Darshan on Mouni Amavasya day (Wednesday), of Sri Rama by the grace of Hanuman. This time Tulsidasji did not recognise him as the Lord came in the form of a child. Now Hanuman took the form of a parrot and pointed out to Tulsidas that the child was Sri Rama who asked sandal paste from him. Then Tulsidas was thrown in divine rapture. He applied sandal paste to the Lord's forehead and applied it himself also. The Lord then disappeared.

By the command of Sri Hanuman he left for Ayodhya in 1628. At that time there was Mela in Prayag. Tulsidasji stayed there for some time. Six days after the Mela was over he was sitting under-neath a banyan tree. He had Darshan of Bharadwaja and Yajnavalkya. He then returned to Kashi and lived in the house of a Brahmin in Prahlad ghat. Here he had the inspiration to write poems. He wrote several poems in Sanskrit. To his astonishment he found that whatever poems he wrote in the day were missing at night. This continued for a number of days. Then he had a vision of Lord Siva and Parvathi. He prostrated before them. Then the Lord said, "Go to Ayodhya. There write the sacred Ramacharitra in Hindi Bhasha. You have my full blessing. Your work will be as famous as the Samaveda." Then Tulsidasji returned to Ayodhya.

In 1631 on the Ramanavami day Tulsidas began to write his Ramayana. That day was as auspicious as the birth of Sri Rama in Treta Yoga. It took him 2 years, 7 months and 26 days to complete the work. He completed the work in 1633 Margsirsh in the bright half of the month when Sri Rama's marriage was being celebrated.

He then returned to Kashi. He recited the Ramayana before the Lord Viswanath. After completion he kept the book in the presence of Siva and when he went in the morning for Darshan he found the words "Satyam Sivam Sundaram" written on it. At the same time the same words were heard within the temple in a loud tone.

When the Pundits of Banaras came to know of this they were filled with jealousy. One day the Pundits employed two dacoits to go to Tulsidas and steal his Ramayan. When the thieves went there he was in meditation. The thieves saw near the Ramayan two young men of blue complexion with bows and arrows guarding the Ramayan. They were frightened and fell at his feet. They became his disciples later on. When Tulsidasji came to know that the Lord was guarding his house he felt great remorse and abandoned his house and allowed the things to be taken away by thieves. He then kept the book in his friend's house. His name was Todarmal. He then made another copy of it. Then

a number of copies of the book were made. Finding no means to defeat Tulsidas, the jealous Pundits showed the manuscripts of Tulsi Ramayana to one Swami Madhusudan Saraswati. He read the book with great joy. He then wrote his beautiful opinion on it, which ran thus, "In this blissful realm of Kasi (forests) moves the moving Tulsi plant (Tulsidas). His Ramayana poem is very beautiful in which dwells ever the black bee of Sri Rama."

आनन्दकानने ह्यस्मिन् जंगमस्तुलसीतरः ।

कविता मञ्जरी भाति रामभ्रमरभूषिता ॥

The Pundits were not satisfied even then. They kept a lot of religious books including the Vedas in front of Lord Viswanath in the Banaras temple. At the bottom-most place they kept the Tulsikrit Ramayana. They closed the doors of the temple and came and looked the next day. To their surprise the Ramayana of Tulsidas had come to the top. Now the pride of the Pundits was put down and they began to adore Tulsidas.

Tulsidasji wrote a number of books. Among them Sri Ram Charitramanas tops the list. On account of the blessings of Lord Siva, now this book is worshipped and read with great adoration throughout the world. Vinayapatrika is another important book of Sri Tulsidas.

Some thieves came to Tulsidas to take away his goods. They saw a blue complexioned guard with a bow and arrow in his hand, keeping watch at the gate. Wherever

they moved, the guard followed them. They were frightened. In the morning they asked Tulsidas "O venerable saint! We saw a young guard with bow and arrow in his hand at the gate of your residence. Who is this man?" Tulsidas remained silent and wept. He came to know that Lord Ram had been taking the trouble Himself to protect his goods. He at once distributed all his wealth among the poor.

While he was in Banaras one day a murderer came and cried, "O Saint! I am a murderer. For the love of Rama give me alms." Tulsidas called him to his house and gave him the sacred food which had been offered to the Lord and declared that the murderer was purified." The Brahmins of Banaras reproached Tulsidas and said, "How can the sin of a murderer be absolved? How could you eat with him? If the sacred bull of Siva, Nandi, would eat from the hands of the murderer only then we would accept that he has been purified." Then the murderer was taken to the temple and the bull ate from his hands. The Lord revealed Himself before Tulsidas in the form of Lord Rama with bow and arrows.

A lady whose husband had died came and prostrated before Tulsidasji and he blessed her "May you ever remain a sumangali ie. with your husband." The woman wept and said, "My husband is dead. I am going to become Sati now with his dead body." Then Sri Tulsidasji meditated on the Lord and said, "O Lady!

give me a promise that you will be devoted to the Lord till the end of your life and your husband will come back to life." The lady did so and the husband came back to life.

The Moghul emperor at Delhi came to know of the great miracle done by Tulsidas. He sent for him. Tulsidas came to his court. The emperor said, "O saint! perform a miracle." Tulsidas said, "I have no miracle or superhuman power in me. I know only the name of Lord Rama." The emperor put him in prison and said, "I will release you only when you show some miracle." Tulsidas then prayed to Hanuman. Countless bands of powerful monkeys entered the royal court. The emperor got frightened and said, "O saint! I have now understood your greatness." He at once released him from the prison and all the monkeys disappeared.

During the last days, Tulsidasji lived in Banaras. He was living in Asi ghat. At night one day he was frightened by Kali assuming a physical form. He then prayed to Hanuman. Then Hanumanji asked him to write the Vinaya Patrika. He wrote it and placed it before the Lord. The Lord blessed Tulsidas and made him fearless.

Sri Tulsidasji left his mortal coil on the third day of Krishna Tithiya 1588 A.D. on the banks of Ganges at Asi ghat at Banaras at the ripe age of 91. Repeating the sacred Taraka Mantra Ram the devotee merged in the Lord.

## BOOKS WRITTEN BY TULSIDASJI.

1. Sri Ramacharitramanas.
  2. Vinayapatrika.
  3. Ramayana Gitavali.
  4. Ramayan Kavitaavali.
  5. Dohavali.
  6. Ramsalaka.
  7. Hanumanbahuk.
  8. Janakimangal.
  9. Parvathi Mandal.
  10. Kadka Ramayana.
  11. Barva Ramayan.
  12. Rola Ramayan.
  13. Jhoolna Ramayana.
  14. Chandavali Ramayana.
  15. Chhappai Ramayana.
  16. Kundaliniya Ramayana.
  17. Vairagya Sandipini
  18. Tulasi Satasayi.
  19. Ramajna.
  20. Ramlala Nahachu.
  21. Krishna Gitavali.
  22. Sankatamochana.
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## TULASI DAS'S GIFT TO HUMANITY

The life and work of the great soul whose birthday we joyously celebrate on this auspicious seventh day of the month of Sravan, are themselves rich legacies left by the saint-poet to us of the present day. In this connection we have to take careful note of one special point regarding the origin of his greatest work Tulasi-Ramayana, popularly known as Ramacharita-Manas. This much-venerated scripture was started by Tulasi Das upon one Sri Rama Navami Day, and it is said that on that particular Sri Rama Navami Day the heavenly bodies presented the exact identical conjunctions and astronomical juxtapositions as were present upon the actual day of Bhagavan Sri Rama's Avatar upon earth, many thousands of years ago. Thus it may be said that in the birth of this inspiring and life-transforming poetical work of the great Tulasi Das we have a re-incarnation of that very divinity (this time in a different form) as appeared in the person of Lord Rama previously,

The sacred Ramacharita Manas is, therefore, Bhagavan Sri Rama Himself manifesting and expressing through the written word. No evil person can realise the sanctity and

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*The gist of Sri Swami Chidanandaji's discourse on the occasion of Tulsi Das Jayanti celebrations.*

the glory of the Ramacharita-Manas. Saint Tulasi Das himself was fully aware of this fact, for he states in unmistakable terms: "That man who recites or listens to or sings the life-story of the ornament of Raghu's Race (Rama) gets cleansed of all impurities of this iron age and without difficulty attains straightaway to the divine abode of Lord Rama." Study of this rare treasure is, therefore, like unto a dip in the transcendental ocean of Satchidananda itself. It is a nectarine lake bathing in which you attain freedom from all afflictions and casting aside the shackles of birth and death, you rise up into the realm of eternal bliss and immortality. Hail, all Hail, to the divine Ramacharita-Manas. All glory be unto its saintly author.

The life of this great saint is filled with a number of inspiring incidents which come as a flood of light revealing to us certain lofty truths of spiritual life. Upon one occasion the jealous enemies of the saintly Tulasi Das wished to destroy the precious manuscripts then being written day by day, by the saint. They hired two murderous ruffians for this purpose who were to break into the house of Tulasi Das at dead of night and bring away the manuscripts. When these fierce felons had gained entrance into his abode on a dark night and were stealthily moving towards the altar wherein the manuscripts reposed, lo! two shining youths with blazing eyes and angry looks confronted them with drawn bows wherein glittered sharp and deadly arrows ready-

poised to spring forth upon the midnight marauders and make quick end of them then and there. The ruffians were struck down with fear. They cried out in terror, ran up to the sleeping saint and fell at his feet entreating him to protect their lives. They cried: "Oh, sire save us, oh, save us from these wrathful young warriors with terrific looks." Thus it was that in the life of this great saint a tangible presence and the ever-protecting hand of the Lord become a living fact. Similarly did the divine presence come visible to his aid when the emperor tried to persecute the saint. The Lord Hanuman assumed innumerable forms and so devastated the capital that the emperor had to come to his knees and ask pardon of Saint Tulasi Das. The declaration of the Lord in the Gita that He ever abides by those who constantly think of Him is practically demonstrated in the experience of Tulasi Das.

In his inspired life, again, we have the evidence of the power of the divine name. Being the ardent votary of Ram-Nam, Tulasi Das performed the unbelievable miracle of bringing back to life a dead man through the power of Nama-Kirtan. Man can do almost anything, but to give life to the dead is the prerogative of the Lord alone. But the Lord showed through His devotee that He and His Divine Name are one and the same. Through the power of the Name, the Lord enabled Tulasi to do what He alone could do. By this he has proved

for us that the practice of the divine name alone is sufficient to make man divine is the Yuga-Dharma of this age.

Before concluding, one more valuable lesson may be gained from the life, namely the untold benefits of developing our Viveka-Buddhi. As a youth, Saint Tulasi Das was mentally attached to his beautiful wife. His entire heart's love and his entire poetical talents were directed and offered at the feet of his beloved. But one day a small incident opened his eyes to the folly of such physical attachment and, lo and behold! there was a transformation wrought overnight in this loveful youth. No more the passionate swain! but then was now the young Sadhu with his determination and dispassion fully awakened and thirsting for the realization of his true Beloved, the Lord Himself. This was possible because within him Tulsi Das had already the faculty of Viveka in all its fulness though dormant and inactive due to ignorance. It was like dry gun-powder all ready to be fired. The one incident acted as a spark to awaken the blaze. But the ordinary man who has neglected to develop this precious faculty of Viveka and Vichara gets any number of awakening knocks, warnings and frequent reminders from nature, but yet he continues to be the same man. Despite mother Prakriti's severest blows he fails to learn a lesson and will neither awaken nor be transformed. Not so with true seekers, spiritual aspirants and Sadhaks. For, these are men of the stuff

like that out of which Saint Tulasi Das was made. Full well do they cultivate the treasure of Viveka, Vairagya, Vichara and the like in their inner beings so that even a slight rousing impulse from any experience of life at once brings them into wakefulness and they turn from the lure of the senses towards the call of the Immortal. Thus do they walk in the exemplary footsteps of Saint Tulasi Das to whose memory we offer our countless adorations upon this auspicious day.

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## MRS. ANNIE BESANT

In the year 1847, Mrs. Besant was born of middle class parentage, in London. Her father died when she was a child. In her childhood no abnormality or genius was found.

At the age of 26 she braved destitution, defied public opinion. She was pelted with stones in Lancashire, mobbed or vilified in some places and put in the docks and punished for her birth-control pamphlet but she was courageous. She fought against the dogmatic. She left her husband.

She was an atheist and then a free-thinker. Thereupon she joined another faith—the Fabian Society. Afterwards she joined Madame Blavatsky. She became the President of the Indian National Congress and the leader of the Theosophical Movement.

She was a great traveller. She travelled all over the world many times. She was a rebel and a reformer, a great orator and an inspired leader, a great writer and a skilled organiser.

She was very methodical and neat in her habits. Even in her smallest act, there was method and beauty.

She looked into the details of everything. Nothing escaped her vigilant eye. Everything was kept in its proper place and was done at its proper time. She was punctual to the minute and expected the same quality in others.

She had tremendous power of concentration. She could do her work under any circumstance and under any environment. Goddess Saraswati dwelt in her tongue and fingers.

She organised the Trade Union and worked for women suffrage and equal justice and birth-control. She was fearless and courageous. She was a real mother to many aspirants. She was a great fighter and a ruthless opponent but equally a steadfast friend.

She was a unique personality and a great servant of humanity. Her life was one long chapter of work, and successful achievement. Her work started first in England and was then continued in India in varied fields.

"Without Hinduism," said Mrs. Besant, "India has no future. Hinduism is the soil in which India's roots, are struck, and torn out of that she will inevitably wither, as a tree torn out from its place. Her history, her literature, her art, her movements, all have Hinduism written across them. India lived before other religion"

came; India could live after they passed away. But let Hinduism go. Hinduism that was India's cradle; that would be India's grave."

Her service to their country can never be forgotten by the children of India. She worked hard for India's freedom. May her memory live long in us.

Glory to this great Mother, a sage, a saint, a great orator, a philosopher.

Dr. Annie Besant is a personality that has deservedly acquired a permanent honourable niche within the heart-temple or 'Hridayamandir' of the Indian Nation. Even the very name, Annie Besant, at once rouses thoughts of gratitude and admiration in the minds of all educated and enlightened Indians, especially those in South India where mainly she lived, laboured, fought and won laurels. Yes, fought and won; for Dr. Besant was ever the born-warrior battling determinedly against all such factors and forces that were seeking to harm and to destroy the Spirit of Indian Culture at a critical period of its development.

During the earliest decade of this century, Western ideas and ideals attained their maximum sway over the minds of the average Indian. Every one was getting Anglicised. Everything Indian was neglected and anything that was English was considered heavenly.

Naturally Indian leaders too were not sufficiently heeded when they raised their voice in warning against such shameful unpatriotic aping. At such a crucial moment came Dr. Annie Besant to turn this tide of meaningless imitation and to restore the Nation's loyalty to its own culture and high ideals. She was a God-send peculiarly suited to retrieve the situation. For here she was, an English woman who declared boldly to India the spiritual bankruptcy of the Western World and affirmed emphatically the real greatness and glory of the Upanishadic Culture. All educated Indians opened their eyes now. They could not turn a deaf ear to this phenomenon of a learned and talented English woman—raising her voice in a clarion call for all Indians to become true sons of the Great Mother India, to revitalise her culture and to dedicate themselves heart and soul to the service of the Motherland. They now realised with a shock their past disloyalty to Bharata-mata and resolved to make immediate amends.

Dr. Annie Besant's personality was as much a personality of great actions as it was of great utterances. She did not merely confine herself to calling the people to awaken and act but herself plunged at once into an active and intense struggle against all unspiritual and anti-Indian forces in the social and political life of our country. In this she constitutes a most inspiring example for every aspiring patriot to closely follow. You have to learn from that Great Lady the quality of

sincere practicality which is the secret of true success and real greatness. She was full of the earnest urge to do what she believed in and which she asked others to do.

In Dr. Annie Besant we have a unique example of an Idealist who for all her lofty idealism was at the same time intensely practical. She was a rare type of *A Practical Idealist*. This was because she strove hard to mould her entire life on the lines of the Superman envisaged by Lord Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Action without attachment, heedlessness to success or failure and a perfect concurrence between thought, speech and action, these were the distinctive features of her exceptionally active life. She possessed extraordinary virtue, namely moral courage which made her unflinchingly do that which she was convinced to be the Right, the Good.\* Her inner convictions she actively carried into every moment of her life. Thus she was the dynamic embodiment of her cherished beliefs and principles. This was due to her moral Heroism which admirable quality it is that makes all the difference between ineffective armchair philosophising and a powerful, irresistible live idealism. Mahatma Gandhi himself once declared, "Cultivate the great qualities of Dr. Besant...She is one of the greatest orators of the world because she speaks what she believes and acts according to what she speaks...She has the courage of

her convictions and always puts her words into action... Imitate her unflinching determination and simplicity of life."

True Love infuses an almost superhuman courage into the heart of man. This truth is fully brought out in Dr. Annie Besant's brave life; for she was filled with a boundless love for India. Every action of hers was animated and inspired by a passionate devotion to this land and its sublime culture. This all-consuming emotion urged her on to acts of supreme sacrifice and dedication, the like of which is seldom witnessed in the annals of history. So complete was her dedication that she divested herself of the least tinge of racial superiority and the last vestige of imperial bias. She made herself completely Indian, heart, mind and soul. Writing in *New India* she said in 1916:—"To have the glorious privilege of suffering for India is the Crown of a life which has ever striven to stand for Truth and Freedom...who can deny to me the right to call myself a Child of the Mother land, when I suffer for Her dear sake?" And elsewhere..."I love India as my own. She is mine, India with whom all my hopes of the future and memories of the past are bound up." Again, (so great was her desire to see India in Her pristine glory) she says, "We only ask that we may continue to serve you and struggle side by side with you in this noble battle of Freedom....We have the Indian heart,

the Indian devotion and with all our hearts we thank you that you allow us to work side by side with you; and though God has not given us the blessing of being India-born we have won the right to be Indians by the gift of ourselves." Mark the wonderful depth of the love for India. Note the final expression 'gift of ourselves' which shows the completeness of the dedication. So thorough was her 'bhav' or attitude of dedication that Dr. Besant felt herself as having completely given over her entire life wholly to the service of this ancient land of Bharatavarsha.

She was in this respect, Self-sacrifice personified. The great Poet-philosopher of Santiniketan, the late Rabindranath Tagore gives you a glimpse into what her self-sacrifice implied when he wrote to an English friend, "In this crisis the only European who has shared our sorrow incurring the anger and derision of her countrymen is Mrs. Annie Besant. This was what led me to express my grateful admiration for her noble courage." Dr. Besant's life is truly one of the fairest blossoms offered up at the Altar of Indian Renaissance. Some idea of her love and admiration for India can be got from the following utterance of hers:— "There are many Nations that are political, so many Nations that are wealthy, so many Nations that in the Western sense are great. There is only one Nation the World knows

that may still choose the Spirit instead of the body and spiritual knowledge rather than material gain..... only one Nation amongst all the Nations of the World, only one people amongst all the peoples of the Globe. That Nation is India, that people the Indian people."

Annie Besant was gifted with something of the prophetic vision of the seer. All her extraordinary strength and talents she brought to bear on this noble Cause because with prophetic foresight she beheld with the vision of a Rishi that this ancient land, the cradle of the Upanishadic Culture had to be awakened and stirred up. India, if it had to play her true part in the plan of World-evolution had to be raised up to that exalted height of sublime and living spirituality from which she had gradually slid down. Her prophetic gaze saw this vision of a glorious regenerated Spiritual India and to factualise this vision she strove earnestly and incessantly.

It is the divine law that when you give yourself up heart and soul to an ideal then you must certainly realise it. To what extent Annie Besant's sacrifice and dedication to the cause of India's cultural renovation was crowned with success is at once amply evident even from one single item of her vast work, i.e., her restoration of the Bhagavad Gita to the educated Indian masses and specially to the youth of our land. The personality of Lord Krishna and the Gita ideal of 'renunciation-in-

action'—these two have been raised to a lofty pedestal of adoration and estimation in the Indian mind due to Dr. Annie Besant's indefatigable efforts in this field. Indeed, like an ancient Rishi reincarnate, she came into our midst to preach and spread once again the message of the Gita. The little four-anna edition of her Gita translation has worked a marvel and made a great section of this land Gita-conscious. Several thousands of these pocket-size volumes flooded the country and acquired the familiar name of "Besant's Gita".

She exemplified in herself a true prototype of the Gita pattern which is the very heart of India, so much so that Lokamanya Tilak addressing Dr. Besant said, ".....Regarding you as an embodiment of our principles and our success we offer you our welcome and wish you long life"..... and, Gandhiji directly expressed the Nation's indebtedness and gratitude with the memorable words, "IT IS ANNIE BESANT WHO HAS AWAKENED INDIA FROM HER DEEP SLUMBER AND I PRAY THAT SHE MAY LIVE LONG TO WITNESS A FREE INDIA".

She was thus acclaimed by even the great leaders of the nation and yet Dr. Besant regarded herself as ever the humble server of humanity working under the direction of Higher Ones. Service was her mettle about which she says, "Brethren, do you recognise the Joy of Service when it is rendered as a humble aid on earth to that Will which makes for Righteousness and Bliss..... It is

Service which is joy so profound that it is uttermost Serenity". Herein verily she passes the test of true greatness.

But the only factor that endows her life with an almost holy sublimity is Dr. Besant's intensely spiritual temperament. She was deeply spiritual and her life was rested in Religion. It is what imparted a grandeur to her life. She said, "The last duty that I want to lay stress upon, one which is essentially Hindu.....namely that there is nothing.....which can be separated from Religion. If in God we live, move and have our being, if God dwells in your heart and mine, what can you or I do that is not divine activity, and that ought not to be permeated by the spirit of Religion? Nothing is outside Religion. They say 'Mrs. Besant is a religious teacher; she must have nothing to do with politics'. But I assure you that just because Mrs. Besant is a religious teacher, therefore she has everything to do with politics. "Wherever I am, I do my own work, which is God's work."

This is the real grandeur, the hidden inner grandeur of Mrs. Annie Besant's life. She lived in God; therefore her name will ever live fresh in the memory of man. She is a Western Star that has now permanently obtained a radiant place in the spiritual firmament of the East. May all be inspired and guided by this luminous life in their determined march towards the resplendent Temple of Awakened India !

## NARAYANA GURU

Sri Narayana Guru, a saint and social reformer of Kerala, was born in Malabar in 1854. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit, Malayalam and Tamil. He wandered far and wide in his spiritual search for the answer to the problems of life. Very little is known of his early years.

He first attracted attention as a wandering Sannyasin some thirty years later near the village of Neyyattankara in South Travancore. The villagers served him with faith and devotion.

Early in youth the injustice of shutting out Harijans from the Hindu temple aroused in him an intense sympathy for them. He opened a temple for Harijans (Thiyas). This was his first public work. He conquered all opposition through his will force and wisdom. Hundreds of institutions embodying his principles sprang up throughout Kerala. Schools and dispensaries and Ashrams built in his name are flourishing now. In every one of them the message of unity prevails.

Sri Naryana Guru broke through the thick crust of custom, removed the mud of corruption and the veil of ignorance and released the nectar of freedom.

He was serene, kind, and humorous. He possessed keen intelligence and an indomitable will. He was the essence of Vedanta personified.

Through dedicated action he won the hearts of thousands of outcast followers of his, in Malabar.

He encouraged students and the middle class people to study Sanskrit and Western sciences. His purpose was to lay the foundations of a Co-operation brotherhood which through spontaneous public service would truly reflect the unity at the heart of things that is longed for by all men.

In his later years the Guru became known throughout India. Many famous people paid homage to him and his main centre of activity at Kerala in Travancore. Sri Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi visited his Ashram. Sri Narayana Guru travelled annually throughout South India and Ceylon.

Sri Narayana Guru's anniversary is celebrated throughout South India and Ceylon, about the beginning of September. The occasion is marked by all pomp and splendour of processions and meetings and with fitting reverence.

His life and thought were universal. His teachings and his brilliant example were for all mankind.

Sri Narayana Guru was a mystic, a practical Yogi, the famous spiritual leader of Malabar. He had studied

minutely the sacred books of India. He was very dynamic. He showed that the principles of Vedanta could be applied in daily life. His entire life's work was an example of how it could be done.

To Sri Narayana Guru, the living embodiment of Advaita, Malabar-India and the whole world owe an immense debt of gratitude which can best be repaid by following his principles and teachings and his glorious example.

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## MAHATMA GANDHI

### Birth and Parentage

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the youngest son of Karamchand Gandhi and Putlibai, was born at Porbander, on the 2nd of October 1869. His father, a Diwan, was truthful, brave, generous, strictly impartial and loyal to the State. His deeply religious mother, Putlibai, had strong commonsense and was well informed about the matters of the state. The ladies of the court had a high regard for her intelligence.

### Education and Marriage

In childhood, Gandhiji was put to school at Porbander. Later, when his father left Porbander for Rajkot to become a member of the Rajasthanik Court, he was put into a primary school and thence into a high school.

When he was learning at the high school, at an early age of thirteen, according to the then existing custom of child-marriage, he was married. By nature his illiterate wife, Kasturibai was simple, bold, independent and persevering.

### Sails for England

Gandhiji passed the matriculation examination in 1887 and sailed for England for studying law. He passed

the London Matriculation with Latin as his second language and afterwards joined the Inner Temple, whence he emerged on the 11th of June, 1891, a Barrister-at-Law.

### Return to the Motherland

On the 12th of June 1891, Gandhiji sailed for home. In Bombay he studied Indian Law and went to Rajkot where he got along moderately well. While in Rajkot, he received an insult from a Political Agent, a British officer, who was prejudiced against his brother. This shock of an insult changed the course of his life. He began learning something of the politics of his country.

### Life in South Africa

In 1893, a Meman firm from Porbander wrote to Gandhiji's brother making the following offer: 'We have business in South Africa. Ours is a big firm; and we have a big case there in the Court, our claim being 40,000 pounds sterling. It has been going on for a long time. We have engaged the services of the best Vakils and barristers. If you send your brother here, he would be useful to us and also to himself. He would be able to instruct our counsel better than we ourselves. And he would have the advantage of seeing a new part of the world, and of making new acquaintances.!' Gandhiji started for South Africa and reached Natal.

In South Africa disillusionments awaited him. He

could not bear the ill-treatment the Indians received at the hands of the colonists, and determined to champion the cause of Indians living there. In 1894, together with a number of prominent members of the Natal Indian community he founded the Natal Indian Congress.

In 1899, at the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war, Gandhiji led an Indian Ambulance Corps. The corps was one thousand strong and saw active service, being on one occasion, at least under heavy fire, and on another, removing the dead body of Lord Roberts' only son from the field. In 1901, owing to a breakdown in health Gandhiji came to India. Scarcely had he spent a year or two in India, when he received an urgent telegram calling him back to South Africa. He obeyed the call. In 1901, he founded the Transvaal British Indian Association and to bring the South African Indians into closer association with each other and to politically and socially educate them, founded a newspaper, the "Indian Opinion". In 1906, a native rebellion broke out in Natal. On behalf of Natal Indians Gandhiji offered a Stretcher-Bearer Corps. During the first world war he raised an Ambulance Corps and conducted a recruiting campaign in Karia district.

#### **The Leader of the National Movement**

In the year 1918 Gandhiji assumed the leadership of the Indian National movement, and also associated himself with the Khilafat movement. He adopted the peaceful methods of non-co-operation and non-violence for achieving

freedom for his country from the yoke of foreign rule.

### Becomes a Mahatma

The Gandhi movement spread like a wild fire and roused the masses to political consciousness. Gandhiji was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. He was released in February 1924. He became President of the Indian National Congress in that year.

In April 1930, Gandhiji started Salt Satyagraha. For the breach of the Salt Laws he was interned on the 5th of May 1930 and released on the 25th of January 1931, to go to the Round-table Conference in London. He was once more arrested in January 1933 and released in May of the same year.

Gandhiji's intense love for his fellow-men, long fasts for his country's cause, silent sufferings and sacrifices, indomitable will power, moral force and deep spirituality and ascetic life, permanently won for him the hearts of his countrymen and in their excessive reverence and devotion they bestowed on him the title of Mahatma. He was and is called 'Bapuji' by tens of thousands.

'On Gandhiji's release from the Aga Khan's Palace in May last' writes "*Sunday Times*", "Pandit Malaviyaji sent a wire of greetings : Every hope He will let you live hundred years to serve motherland and mankind." Gandhiji's reply was characteristic. In the course of his

A.I.C.C. speech on the 8th of August 1942, he had made a humorous allusion to the possibility of his living for a hundred and twenty-five years. He had often been reminded by his friends about that remark as a 'public commitment' to live for a hundred and twenty-five years. His reply to Malaviyaji ran: 'Your wire. At a stroke you have cut off twenty-five years. Add twenty-five to yours.'

Sri Gandhiji fasted for 20 days and 40 days for purification of his heart on several occasions and took only lime juice. He conducted open air prayers in several places. They were attended by mammoth crowds.

#### **Won our Freedom and Passed away**

On 15th August, 1947, Gandhiji won our Freedom. He was shot at three times at point-blank range by Nathuram (Narayan) Vinayak Godse. 'Hay Ram' was on the lips of Gandhiji just before he gave up his last breath.

### **I**

#### **The Pattern Of A Perfect Life**

Bharatvarsha has always been a land of Eternal ideals, sublime idealism and of supermen who converted these ideals into actuality in their everyday conduct. Bhagiratha and Bhishma, Bharata and Lakshman, Sudama

and Akrura, Ekalavya and Arjuna, Anusuya and Sati, Sabari and Mira, Dhruva and Prahlad are all persons, who represent in themselves some definite aspect of the Ananta Sakti of the Lord.

Sri Gandhiji is a name that symbolises a force and a power. This is the outcome of an unassailable moral purity and a spotless character. His name has become synonymous with unbending moral rectitude, heroic allegiance to truth and perfect uprightness in private and public life.

Mahatma Gandhiji's life was a monument to the triumph of spirit over flesh. It was a living witness to the victory of the divine part in man over his baser self. A continuous process of self-restraint and discipline together with prayer and an invincible faith in the Divine, enabled him to resist all temptations, overcome all obstacles and gain self-mastery. Now his name is a source of inspiration and encouragement to many an earnest and struggling soul aiming at the conquest of the self.

His life became a miracle of self-control and perfect non-attachment; but this was attained only through deliberate effort, systematic and earnest. Early in life he too had his own spiritual problems, mental conflicts and moral struggles. But his innate sincerity and earnest pursuit of truth overcame all doubts and temptations, and he emerged out of these struggles, a man of settled

convictions, unshakable faith and spotless personality. The latter half of his life served to strengthen adherence to his principles and establish him upon the bed-rock of the Eternal. It is from this Source that he drew strength for life's battles, solace during disappointment and guidance, every moment of his life.

Ordinarily man always turns to external things for aid and support. But external things are by themselves treacherous props, tottering on the shifting sands of this evanescent world-play, and they give way when man leans on them betraying him when he needs them most. Herein lies the explanation as to why the career of the vast majority of persons in the world is invariably a losing struggle. But the few that realise the folly of such a course set about founding their lives upon unchanging, eternal principles. They are verily like houses built upon rock. Waves may dash against them, tempests blow over them; but they are firm and unshaken. Sri Gandhiji was one such rare soul, who made the Eternal Undying Unchanging Principle of Truth, the keystone of his life. It is the central fact of his very being. Having learnt to support himself by the Eternal Principle and Source of Life he was not affected by the strife and strain of the world around. His firm allegiance to this inner Reality brought a great calmness and beauty into his personal life and a balance and harmony in all his outward affairs. We find in him a modern example of the *Sthita-Prajna* of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

It is of particular interest to note here that Gandhiji made the Gita the guiding scripture of his life. He ever endeavoured his utmost to live up fully to the Gita ideal of performing actions without the idea of agency or any expectation of fruits. He had infinite faith in and reverence for the Sacred Gita, which he regarded as his Spiritual Mother to whom to turn for help in solving his inner conflicts and problems. Hence all his attempts to realise Truth were characterised by a spirit of non-attachment and desirelessness. These two great principles of Satyam and Tyaga, Truth and renunciation constitute the essence of the genius of Hindu culture. Therefore Gandhiji can be said to be the representative of these two fundamental aspects of Hinduism.

His life was a continuous and progressive substantiation of Upanishadic declaration : "Truth alone triumphs, not falsehood."

To stick to Truth at all costs is verily a hero's task and requires moral courage of a very high order. Only one who becomes absolutely fearless can face the whole world and even death in his adherence to Truth. This fearlessness comes to him who gives up all attachment, including that for his body, who reduces his life to one of absolute simplicity and pledges himself to perfect Ahimsa.

All this Sri Gandhiji did. The Gita ideal of perfect non-attachment, and dispassion he lived. He was also

the Apostle of the Life Simple. Plain living and high thinking formed the cardinal tenets of his philosophy of life, and his name will live for ever in the annals of "World History" as that of an exponent of the technique of non-violence.

His mission in life was to manifest Truth. Ever since his earliest childhood he was imbued with a fervid attachment to Truth. It so grew upon him in subsequent years that it became the dominant passion of his life. He has written "Truth has been the very foundation of my life" and to him this Truth is synonymous with God. Thus to manifest the Divine everywhere, every moment of his life, through every act and utterance was the sublime work that became eventually the achievement of his life.

Gandhiji sought to make himself a fully worthy and perfect instrument for working out this lofty mission and come out with signal success in the task. The secret of his success he attributes to what he calls "Soul Force"—Atma Shakti, which he attained through a rigid observance of perfect Brahmacharya, and to which end he made self-restraint, especially the control of the palate, the guiding rule of life. To cultivate the necessary will-power and determination for achieving this self-restraint and to sustain him in the struggle for self-mastery Sri Gandhiji had recourse to two potent and infallible means—sincere heartfelt prayer and Ram

Nam. Thus, this noble life was founded upon unshakable living faith in the Divine as the basis.

Very few personalities have combined within themselves so many aspects as a servant of Humanity as Gandhi did. One of the many ways in which truth finds expression in human society is in the form of justice. This is why we always find Gandhiji the champion of justice, the protagonist of the cause of the wronged and the oppressed, the poor and the down-trodden, the out-cast and the under-dog. The suppressed agony and the anguish that wrung the heart of the patriot in Vivekananda throbbed day and night also in the bosom of this Humanitarian. His unbounded love for the masses is a phenomenon surpassed, if at all, only by their love for him.

As a Reformer, he strove all through his life to abolish cruel customs and harmful practices. The curse of child marriage, the unjust dowry system, enforced child widowhood, the iniquitous practice of drink—all these he vigorously endeavoured to eradicate. He was the greatest Friend, Guide and Philosopher of the Student-world, which he inspired with the high ideals of Purity, Truth and Dignity of Human Labour and sense of Justice and Duty. As he had far more faith in teaching by example than by preaching, Gandhiji tried to put into practice in the model village of Sevagram all the principles he professed.

## II

## Gandhiji - The Ideal Karma Yogi

Gandhiji loved and lived a life of Truth. He had a passion for Truth, and in his life, to the very last breath, he exemplified in himself the glory of Truth. His "An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth" is one of the most thrilling biographies and every spiritual aspirant will be greatly benefited by a deep study of the Truths that he has revealed about himself, his own struggle with the lower nature, and the secrets of his success.

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Mahatmaji has shown how a life of complete renunciation can be led while yet remaining in the thick of the battle. His was a supreme example of one who has completely annihilated the ego, the little 'I' and who has led a Divine Life while yet remaining in the world — truly a lotus leaf in water.

His tenacious adherence to the cause of the poor, the down-trodden Harijan, the common man of the Indian village, is indeed worthy of emulation. Through all the vicissitudes of time, power and fame, Gandhiji had kept before the eyes of the Congress the fundamentals of the programme with which it came into being, — the amelioration of the suffering of the villager. A supreme example of this truth is his achievement in the matter of getting the Salt Tax waived! Another is his insistence against all opposition, often from the ranks of his own followers, on the introduction of prohibition throughout the land.

Uncrowned King of the Land, he had yet remained the friend of the poor: he lived for them: he moved among them as one of them: he loved them: and he served them with all his heart. He saw his God in them! In their service he wore out his body.

The Father of the Nation in every sense of the term — I say so advisedly for besides winning for India her freedom from foreign political yoke or Swaraj, Gandhiji had brought about a re-orientation in the average Indian's outlook, and instilled in him love of God, his religion and his own motherland, all of which had been eclipsed for more than one century by the unhealthy influence of Western culture, manners and language—the Father of the Nation chose to remain away from power and position till the very last day, refusing to profit by his own labours! This indeed is the noblest example of Phala-Tyaga which the Lord in the Gita characterises as real renunciation. Several times when the Congress turned away from him, he coolly stepped aside and blessed the great organisation with a smile. This shows clearly that under all circumstances Gandhiji was unaffected and 'felt that is was his life-breath! Every evening, in spite of the heaviest load of responsibilities that weighed down his shoulders, he repaired to the prayer ground to offer his congregational prayers to the Almighty. I wish every leader and every politician, every King and every

President, follows this golden example. For, then and then alone will their heads be cool for judgment, their hearts in tune with the infinite, their entire being permeated with the Divine Will.

The Gita ideal of a Karma Yogi was Gandhiji. What an amount of struggle he had to pass through, what an amount of mental and physical disciplines he had to undergo, is clearly portrayed in his autobiography. An apostle of self-control, he had clearly set before us in unambiguous terms the rugged path everyone desiring to achieve the goal of self-control has to tread, the pitfalls on the way, the precautions he had to take, and the method he had to adopt. Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya were his watchwords—the three qualities that go into the making of every superman or God-man, which are incidentally, the watchwords of the Divine Life Society, too.

Gandhiji would not allow even the most insignificant of creatures to be harmed. He was on a level with Lord Jesus in putting into practice the well-known precept of Jesus: "Turn your left cheek to the man who smites you on the right." Gandhiji's love knew no bounds: he had no enemies. In a loving embrace he brought to himself even those who were antagonistic to him, and to his principles, and who unilaterally considered themselves his 'enemies' and extended towards them all his hand of love!

In plain speaking—which is the aspect of the practice of Truth—perhaps no one can excel Gandhiji. There was perfect unison between his thoughts, words and deeds. He said what he felt; and he acted in strict accordance with his own convictions. He kept his promise to the very letter. He was punctual and regular in his daily duties.

Another Divine quality should perhaps rank foremost in the eyes of every aspirant.— the readiness to accept one's own defects, shortcomings and mistakes. I would ask every aspirant to emulate Gandhiji's example in this respect. Never once did he fail in his regard. Even at the slightest hint of his mistake, he would sit in judgment over himself, introspect, analyse himself thoroughly and if he was convinced of his own wrongdoing, openly admit his error! Very few leaders would have dared to do this.

The one great service—the greatest service, I should say—that Gandhiji has rendered to humanity, is the gift of an entirely novel, divine weapon to fight against wars: That is Satyagraha, the non-violent weapon whose potency in warfare against wars, hatred, ill-will and violence, Gandhiji had proved in his own life-time. Would that the world awoke to his clarion call and realised that the path to prosperity lay not in wars and violence, but in peace and non-violence. Non-violence was, with him, not a negative virtue, but the positive one, of love.

It was at the altar of non-violence, at the altar of love, at the altar of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood, which by itself symbolised his passion for the bringing about of a world-brotherhood that he laid his mortal coil. The establishment of this world-brotherhood alone can bestow on humanity peace, prosperity and happiness for all time to come, erasing from the fair face of the earth wars, riots and bloodshed. The establishment of such a world-brotherhood alone can be a fitting monument to this great Apostle of Non-violence and Love.

Gandhiji has immortalised himself through the relentless pursuit of Truth. He has endeared himself to the entire humanity through his untiring selfless service to the masses, his devotion to the Lord, his humility, his utter egolessness—in short, DIVINE LIFE.

### III

#### The Divine Life Of Gandhiji

Life on earth is a gradual process of the unfolding of the Divine Consciousness which man essentially is. This process naturally shows variations in the different stages of the life of the individual. The push of the expansion of consciousness is of varying degrees of momentum in different centres of its activity; for, every being is a centre of consciousness. The adorable Gandhiji was an intensely spiritual personage. He lived a life of both an external activity and an internal awareness,

preferring to do good to man and at the same time leading an intensely divine life of inward consciousness. He tried to harmonise his individuality with the workings of the Eternal Nature of which all other finite natures form aspects.

In his swelled-up vanity fed on the bread of an ego-centric propensity, man knows not the noble way of right living, though he professes to have laudably triumphed over the forces of the earth, a speck in infinite space, and to have won victory over time, etc., for, he is ignorant of the Eternal Good! What if these mighty mountains are disintegrated by his atom bombs, when he is limited by corporeal bondage and does not know the way of freeing himself from it and attaining Eternal Peace and Supreme Bliss? The Glorious Gandhi knew such a way of Divine Life, and one has to take his illustrious life as a Guiding Light in the onward spiritual march.

Gandhiji's concept of "truth" was Absolute, which he adored as God, the Lord of Love, or the Principle of Ahimsa, and for which he was prepared to sacrifice his dearest things, even his very existence itself; and often he had glimpses of that Truth. Yet, to lead a perfect integral life, he adhered to the universal imperatives of right conduct, self-restraint, purity of conscience and high moral law, and, in the spiritual field, to the Gita and the Upanishads. Living up to them he showed to every one how to confine himself to a disciplined, systematised life

of onward progress and step above into the Life Divine. Gandhiji was a specimen of the all-round life, who majestically walked towards the Life in the Eternal Principle. My exhortation, therefore, for the good of all, is to walk in the foot-steps of Gandhiji, who delivered, through his picturesque life, the gospel of selfless service, universal interest—for, individual interest is the rock-foundation of all evils in life—and unostentatious living in the Divinity Transcendent, as well as the ideal doctrine of living in the world and yet not being of it.

Many people living in an atmosphere of materialism and possessed of a contaminated intellect know not the inward life of Gandhiji. Only the spiritual man knows him better than others. He had been striving and pining to achieve Self-realisation, and every act of his in the political arena was directed towards this grand Goal of Life. He was a versatile aspirant after the transformation of the entire lower human nature. He was a genuine servant of mankind, a sincere child of Truth, a devout son of God. In his humility he concealed his religious and spiritual life devoted to the Infinite Truth or God.

What do his spiritual days of silence signify? They signify his Soul-longing, the soul longing to exist in the pristine Majesty of his own Self, in the Silence of the Ineffable Glory of Divinity, replete with Pure Delight-Awareness which sages only know! To people of weak mind and dull intellect who failed to comprehend the spiritual verities with which he was experimenting within

his own laboratory of the mind, he showed some other reasons for his days of silence and fast; few knew his internal silence and the internal fast ! What does his fast mean? It denoted his inward detachment and the potency of his discrimination and discernment to deny the reality of the frail physical nature and assert the Self-sufficiency of Absoluteness. May you all amend thus your modes of living !

Knowing the world to be transient, an evanescent show. He steered himself through it as a mighty, venerable, unique Leader, a guiding Father whose strength lay in an indomitable will, sword in non-violence, bread in the Name of God, support in the spinning wheel, passion in Truth, dependence in God, dignity in the implicit obedience to the Spiritual Law, peace in renunciation, fame in purity of living, faith in the Lord and in the Wisdom of the Seers, sacrifice in the sordid self, price of life in Salvation alone, and ego in the doom. Such a life may you all lead and be supremely blessed as he !

His pure thoughts, originating from the Divine Consciousness, within, were pulsating in the heart of many an individual of this globe and touched the heart of all with a love to reverence him as a "*Great Soul*" and accept him as a revered Father ! No wonder, people worshipped him as God and erected a temple for him--in their hearts too.

Gandhiji, as a seeker after the Infinite Existence,

sought first to try a harmonising of the minds of men through raising their feelings to subtler and higher states of life which are nearer to Divinity, and thus making them pacific in their nature, if not allowing them to become helpers in each other's progress. The world is made divine through mass-transformation and rendered fit to become a suitable field for the unobstructed free march towards the One Destination of all. Gandhiji did it—all glory be to him ! If this is not done, the miseries of life and the difficulties of true progress cannot be avoided. The consciousness of every man urges him to effect this glorious purpose, even against his deliberation, for the expansion of the finite into Infinitude necessitates a universal harmony of living, without which the spiritual struggle is beset with ceaseless oppositions. Gandhiji tried his best to harmonise the mind and spirit of all; and for this, people owe a great debt of deep gratitude to him.

The highest honour and tribute one can pay to a great man is to emulate his example and model our life on the lines indicated by him. May Sri Gandhiji's spirit bless us all with the vision and the strength to realise in our everyday life all his lofty ideals of Truth, Purity, Non-violence and Faith in Divine.

May the Mahatma's light of love illumine the hearts of nations and individuals ! May his dream of a world unity come true this very day ! May Peace, Love, and

Joy take their abode in the hearts of all, routing out hartred, ill-will and enmity !

### Some Anecdotes About The Mahatma

Most people think that when Gandhiji meets to discuss political questions with his colleagues, the atmosphere must be very tense and solemn. The fact is that these meetings are often a picnic of wit and humour. Here is an illustration. C.R. and Gandhiji were discussing a letter which Gandhiji had addressed to Mr. Churchill containing his celebrated courteous retort to the latter's description of him as "the naked Fakir."

C. R. I am afraid your letter will be misunderstood.  
It was a naughty letter.

G. I don't think so, I meant it seriously.

C. R. You have touched him on the raw by rubbing in a past utterance of his, of which he is probably not very proud.

G. No. I have taken out the sting by appropriating his remark as an unintended compliment.

C. R. I hope you are right.

G. I am sorry, I can't return the compliment.

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When the All India Village Industries Association was formed, Gandhiji came to live with us at Maganvadi

so as to be on the spot to guide the policy of the Association. One of our rules at that time was that everyone should take part in all our daily activities. This included washing of heavy kitchen utensils coated with soot and dirt. One day it fell to Gandhiji's lot to clean the kitchen pots. I was his partner. So we both sat together, near the well, with cocoanut fibre in our hands, and ashes and mud by our side, and we were scrubbing the black stuff off. Suddenly, Kasturibai Gandhi appeared on the scene. She could not tolerate the sight of the great Mahatma with his hands up to the elbow in dirt. She watched him for a few minutes and burst out in Gujarati, telling Gandhi that this was no work for a person like him, and that he ought to be engaged in better work. In a rage she asked him to get up and go away, leaving the work to be done by others and, swiftly suiting her action to her words, snatched off the *dekohi* from his hands, leaving Gandhiji bewildered at the quickness of her action. With the cocoanut fibre in one hand and the other hand all full of dirt, he looked at me with open mouth and laughed, saying: "Kumarappa, you are a happy man. You have no wife to rule you this way. However, I suppose, I have to obey my wife to keep domestic peace. So you will excuse me if I go away leaving her to partner your washing of the kitchen pots!" (By Sri J. C. Kumarappa)

To my cost, I saw a great deal of the experimental mind of Gandhiji when I stayed with him at Maganvadi,

Wardha. I was new to him then. So he made me sit by him during meals. He was experimenting with various articles as diet. One was fresh neem leaves made into a paste. It was as bitter as quinine. Daily he swallowed large quantities of it himself and served me with some. I had to put on a nice face over it, and eat without flinching all that was placed in my plate. Then there was soya beans. Everyone sang its praise at that time in India. Gandhiji got some grown in Maganvadi, and we were all served with it at every meal. It was cooked, mashed and eaten without further ado. My trouble was that besides eating my share of it, I had to eat what Gandhiji thought was too much for him and graciously passed on to me. Then we used to have 'salad', i. e., any non-poisonous fresh green leaves he found growing about the place. These we dipped in salt and ate.

#### **Tamarind Juice**

We grew plenty of oranges in Maganvadi. He got a brain-wave that he would make wealth out of waste; and produce murabba (marmalade) out of their skins which are usually thrown away. So we were feasted with orange-skin marmalade! In the South tamarind is much in vogue for seasoning food and making Rasam, and we who were from the South justly felt insulted that so famed a preparation of ours as Rasam was caricatured thus. It was the colour of mud and tasted much like what it looked! The next time some groundnut was put into it to make it less forbidding.

Another experiment was with oil cake. We were extracting oil in Maganvadi with the bullock-driven oil press. Oil cake was said to have valuable nutritive properties. So Gandhiji thought 'why not see if tasty dishes could be made out of it for human consumption?' We were therefore, served oil-cake 'chutney' made with *dahi* (curd). Garlic is reputed to have antiseptic qualities when eaten raw. Gandhiji tried large quantities himself and gave it to whomsoever would eat it. The result was soon everybody round him stank of garlic. Lately it was reported in the paper that ordinary grass had plenty of vitamins and made a perfect food for human beings. Fortunately, however, the discovery was not made when Gandhiji was still with us in Maganvadi, for then he might have decided to wind up the kitchen and ask us to graze on the lawn!

#### Interest in Patients

He depended on diet as his chief remedy for disease. Disease gave him a vast field for experiment. He delighted in treating patients. He would listen very carefully to all their complaints, enquire in detail about their diet and prescribe to the last ounce what they should eat or drink, and when reports had to come to him regarding each patient before the next food was prescribed, and often he saw himself that every item of food was in order and in the right proportion before he allowed the tray to be taken in. His interest in his patients was so great that he would visit them morning and

evening, and would hate to be separated from them even by important political work with the Viceroy. He would rush back to their bedside as though they were infants to be nursed by no one but him. (By Sri Bharatan Kumarappa.)

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## SHINING EMBODIMENT OF DIVINE LIFE

Special days that are observed in commemoration of great personalities who have lived amidst, served, made their impression upon, and glorified mankind by their words, acts, shining personality, example and their entire life, are precious opportunities given to us to revitalise ourselves by recalling vividly before our mind's vision, the ideal which they stood for and exemplified in themselves. Such an opportunity is the annual occasion on the 30th of January when millions and crores over Bharatavarsha gather to pay their tribute to the memory of that most solemn event when by a supreme act of self-sacrifice the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhiji, culminated his life of continuous self-sacrifice and service of the entire nation. On this day, countless people will be pouring out their homage and heart's reverence to that great selfless soul who is to them their deliverer and guiding light.

But apart from his aspect as a national leader and the torch-bearer of Bharatavarsha's freedom, Mahatma Gandhiji embodied in his personality a great example and ideal that is of special significance and value to the spiritual aspirant, and seekers on the path of Truth and Self-realisation,

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The full text of a powerful discourse given by Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj at a Satsang convened at Sri Sivanandashram on the 30th January, 1951, to commemorate the Martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhiji.

Sadhakas and Yogis. For them it is the consideration of the "Mahatma" that is of special importance, quite apart from "Gandhi" the political leader and patriot. The fact of his great saintliness is a thing, a study of which will prove of immense gain to all sincere aspirants who are struggling to perfect themselves in spiritual life and the path of Yoga Sadhana. Because, personally this Great Man was in fact a shining embodiment of divine life, a life of absolute truth, of spotless purity, and an overwhelming universal love and compassion which made it totally impossible for him to give even the least pain or hurt to any living creature whatsoever by thought, by word, and much less by deed.

Thus, he was a most scrupulous and earnest follower of the sagely counsel:

मुक्तिमिच्छसि चेत्तात विषयान् विषवत् त्यज  
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसां च सत्यं पीयूषवत् भज

These elements which in fact are the very seed, the root, and the foundation of all spiritual life, Sadhana, and higher Yogic attainments, were lived almost to their perfection by this great soul who as such was and even now is a veritable light to all seekers.

Even from his childhood, Gandhiji was by Providence endowed with a passion for absolute truthfulness. This was his born characteristic. Later in life, by a deliberate, voluntary, determined vow, he imposed upon himself

life-long Brahmacharya. Thus continence and the perfect restraint of all the senses that it implies became the second prominent part of his great personality. Thirdly, due to intense experience and deep thought, he adopted as his life's principle in all his dealings and contacts with the external universe the way of perfect Ahimsa. Thus, this came to form the third lofty strand in the thread of spirituality with which he wove his life.

### The Sadhak's Ideal

The direct inspiration and illumination that is to be derived from his sublime life becomes perceivably apparent perfectly when we analyse the shining components that went to make up the inner personality of Gandhi, as seeker, and the divine man of prayer. If Sadhaks can keep as the ideal of their attainment such a lofty state as that of Sage Rishabhadeva, SriJadabharata, Sadasiva Brahmendra, Jnana Dev, and Lord Dattatreya they could profit immensely by keeping without the least hesitation the personality and life of Mahatma Gandhiji as their ideal for the practical Sadhana-life in its primary foundation stages. By this it is not implied that higher spiritual attainment is denied with reference to this Great One; but it is to show that in him we have a wonderful ideal of a towering moral character and a super excellent ethical life, the like of which has very rarely been found in the annals of human history. Any discerning Raja Yogin will at once perceive that Mahatma Gandhiji was in fact a living personification of Patanjali's Yama-Niyama. The Sadhana Chatushataya of the Jnana Marga found in him

a shining repository. The ideal of Sadachara became embodied in his life. And, all the virtues of a real Karma Yogi were rays, as it were, of this wondrous light. He was nothing, if not a true Yogi, and it is this phase of Gandhiji that is to be treasured by all spiritual aspirants and kept as a guiding star before them in their struggles to become established in the first rungs of the ladder of Yogic life.

### Rays Of Divine Light

What then went into the make-up of this ideal seeker, this genuine Yogi? First is seen the absolute simplicity of his life. How vitally important this is to struggling Sadhakas will be understood when we consider how mistaken notions creep early in the seeker's life through a theoretical knowledge of certain high states of Yogic attainment; wherein the presence or absence of this basic simplicity has become a superfluity. Thus, for instance, an early perusal of Yoga Vasishtha might give overnight the idea that the luxury and opulence of a King Janaka was in no way incompatible with spiritual life or Sadhana. Herein Mahatmaji's fiery example steps in and reminds us gently of the fact that Janaka was not a spiritual aspirant or a seeker. Janaka was a Siddha, nay a super-Siddha even, who had scaled the highest reaches of Self-realisation and experiences; whereas to us, seekers, this basic simplicity of life and habits is absolutely essential without doubt.

Next, we find that he believed in basing his life upon certain definite principles. An unprincipled life was a

tragic waste in his opinion. This, too, is an invaluable guiding pointer to us. And, then a strict adherence to principles and vows formed a salient part of his being. He gave no quarter to himself in this respect and rigidly adhered to his vows with fierce determination. In doing so, he was fearless. He dreaded no opposition and dared any hazard in the path of fulfilling his vows. Thus emerges yet another lofty part in him, that of great moral courage. This is real heroism and Gandhiji's personality had it in full measure. To what extent he bore out this great trait is evident from his early determined attitude and endurance of the violence and injuries that were showered upon him by his persecutors in South Africa. He was unflinching even in the face of destruction of his body, a thing which requires the sternest stuff in man to whom the body is the most precious possession and life the sweetest thing on earth.

However cruel and severe his persecutors, not the least trace of rancour or ill-will ever marred the spotless firmament of Gandhiji's pure and loving heart. For, forgiveness was yet another beautiful flower in this divine bouquet that Mother India laid at the altar of human weal. His forgiveness was sublime and Christ-like. Beloved aspirants, receive this gem from this Great One and treasure it in your spiritual chest. He was able to forgive all, because of his tolerance and equal vision. There was no limit to his patience and his tolerance. All the rigidity and strictness he reserved for himself; for himself

and his weakness he made no concession. But his tolerance was such that there was no end to the concessions that he made to the faults and failings of others. This is yet another lesson for a Sadhaka in any Marga that he may be proceeding towards the ideal of Truth, Bliss and Immortality.

### **The Secrets Of Gandhiji's achievements**

Up to this, we have the picture of Mahatma Gandhi, an ideal and perfect ethical personality. But it is when we seek for the hidden source of the strength and the power that enabled him to live this lofty life that we find the inner side of his spiritual life. Through his own clear and frank utterances, Mahatma Gandhiji admitted and attributed all his powers to the triple factors of Rama-Nam, Prayer and devout accordance to the spirit and teachings of the Bhagavad Gita and the Tulsi Ramayana. Herein, then, lay the secret of the inner serenity of his spiritual power and life's success.

Mahatmaji was the greatest preacher of the efficacy and potency of Ram-Nam. To him there was no power on earth that Ram-Nam could not overcome if need be. His faith in Ram-Nam was ultimate and unshakeable.

His faith in prayer was still more beyond question for it was a faith founded upon intense personal experience and continuous proof in his own life. There was not a single day throughout his life of multifarious

services, when correctly at the hour, this ideal seeker failed to pray. Wherever he be, whatever be the pressure of external affairs, whatever be the state and condition of his own body or mind, at the hour of dusk when twilight gathered around from all the quarters, there you find him, this Godly man, withdrawing himself into his inner Silence, motionless, devout on the dais, head bent in prayer and supplication and in deep and earnest thought of God. Thus it was all the twelve months, 365 days in the year that, without missing a single day, this great soul had daily communion with the Almighty. What a lofty example for Sadhakas or seekers who are too prone to be lax in their rules and their daily routine of Sadhana, in this Iron Age!

Through all this intensely lived life, his great ideal was the Sthithaprajna of the Gita. Not a day was there when he did not do Swadhyaya of the Second Chapter of the Gita wherein is described the serene man, centred in his own inner Self who goes through life unperturbed by the play of the violent opposites—joy and grief, pain and pleasure, loss and gain, success and failure, praise and censure. Daily reading, daily thinking and daily meditating upon this ideal, Mahatmaji himself was in great measure an example of Sthithaprajna in modern times to all.

To crown it all, the spirit in which he lived his life stands as the greatest inspiration and eye-opener to all spiritual aspirants and Sadhakas. The spirit was that of

a life of service-as-worship. To him every act was divine and every service was worship. Politics to him was but a mere method of worshipping the Self, the Truth, that pervades the entire universe, indwelling all creatures and that permeates everywhere, in and out, above and below and all round, through and through in everything, from the tiniest atom to the greatest sun. He sought every moment of his life, through every thought, word and act that he did, to come face to face with this all-pervading immanent Truth. He sailed through life as a true Vedantin being always powerfully awake to the truth of the Gita :

अज्ञो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो, न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे

He lived in the consciousness of his immortal Atmic State. These are the rays that made up this Great Light, the luminous rays of simplicity, lofty principles, determination, great moral courage, forgiveness, tolerance, equal vision, practice of Ram-Nam, intense prayer, absolute faith in the gospel of the Gita and the Tulsi Ramayana, perfect Vedantic Atma-Bhav and the lofty ideal of service as worship. It behoves every true and earnest Sadhak to walk in the light cast by these rays and strive by every means to make a progressive approach towards that light that was Mahatma Gandhiji. Could we but succeed in growing into the likeness of this great personality, there is no doubt then that the higher attainments of Yogic experience and realisation would come to us rapidly and

surely. The superstructure of divine life when based upon such a firm foundation of ideal ethical life would be lasting and permanent. Therefore, when we utter the name of Mahatma Gandhiji, let not the politics of Gandhiji make us blind to the marvellous spirituality of this Mahatma or the Great Souled One, for, to the spiritual aspirant this is the real treasure and the light that is to be got from him and made our own.

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## MAHATMA GANDHI

### AS AN EMBODIMENT OF ETERNAL TRUTH

Blessed Immortal Souls !

We are here to express our homage and reverence to truth-incarnate upon earth. To That which the Great Ones, the Ancients, have declared "Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudhaa Vadanti", the One Truth, the Ultimate Reality that descended upon earth in the form of a man, and whom mankind knew as the Mahatma.

It is not the mere human personality that took birth at Porbundor and was educated in the West, and lived a life of intense political activity which ultimately resulted in the freedom of our mother-country, and then died a glorious martyr's death. No, it is not merely this personality that we have met here to honour. It is not merely to recall the variegated aspects of this human life and to express our gratitude and reverence to what he has achieved for us as a nation—it is not for this that the Gandhi-Jayanti is celebrated. But, it is to recognise and raise our consciousness in reverent homage to the Truth which shone through the medium, the channel of this exceptional human personality.

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*A discourse by Swami Chidananda Ji on the occasion of the celebration of the Gandhi Jayanti on the 2nd October, 1951.*

It is to do this worship of the Ultimate Reality, shining through this frail human form, that the Gandhi Jayanthi is celebrated. If we view today's observance and celebration in this light then we have understood to some extent what Mahatmaji was and still is. Because, understood in this light, we shall realise that he is an Immortal principle. If we do not grasp this essential aspect of this Great Spirit, then we have failed to know what Mahatmaji is.

To us he really represents a spark from the Infinite Blaze of Sat. To India, especially, he embodies in himself a true representative of the great Upanishads and the Vedas, and the Puranas that have sought to give us some idea of what the great reality is. For if we consider what we have in Gandhiji, what it is that he has given to us, we shall find that we are confronted by a significant fact, viz., all things appear and give themselves out upon this earth in a two-fold way. One is, the things as the world perceives them, things as men see and know them, and, the other is, things as they are in themselves, objectively. We shall find that these two aspects stand in strange contrast. Things as they are, are a startling revelation to man who has been in the habit of taking them to be what his own imperfect senses and intellect made them appear to his consciousness.

#### **Reality And The Appearance**

Thus thousands and millions of people who have visited the pilgrim-centre of Tiruvannamalai have, for

centuries and centuries, seen the great mass of rock called Arunachala; and they have taken it for a sacred hill. But, it required a Ramana, a Maharishi, another being like Mahatmaji, another spark from that Eternal Fire, to know Arunachala as it really is, and to declare to mankind : "Oh man ! Know this not to be a mere rock, or a sacred hill or a geographical unit, in this passing world; but, know that Arunachala is a living flame of the transcendental knowledge--experience of the Aparoksha-Jnana, Aparoksha-Anubhava." Sage Ramana saw in Arunachala, the living flame of Atma-Jnana, and knowing it thus as it really is, he was able to transform himself into That. And, we know the phenomenon. It is too well known and too recent for us to realise how he has been a channel of the Great Flame of Knowledge which Arunachala is.

And, thus, too, a great sage has spoken of these crystal waters, the waters of the Ganges that, to the historian and the geologist is a river that gives life to the whole of Northern India. They say, but for the Ganges, North India may be nothing. That may be true and all glory to the Ganges for the physical outward importance that she has in the history of the country. It however required a sage's intuitional vision to tell us, "Oh man ! If you regard Ganges as a mere flow of waters giving fertility to an otherwise unfertile land, well you have known only a very limited aspect of this great fact; and the fact of Ganges is that it is not a mass of water, but it is verily

Satchidananda. The Ganges which flows yonder, in which we dip ourselves, is in reality actual Satchidananda. It is a flow of that Infinite Ocean of Existence, Satchidananda or the Ultimate Reality.

Even so, the dust-storm which rises in the hot weather, the "loo" in Brindavan—they say that that too is Satchidananda. The dust has been hallowed by the contact of the sacred footstep of the Purna Avatara, Para Brahma Sri Krishna.

The vision of man must try to perceive things as they are. And, this great spirit, Mahatmaji who incarnated upon the earth and whose Jayanthi we are trying to celebrate in our own little way, had in himself this inner aspect, what he really was. We shall find that history-books and countless issues of newspapers that, all the days of the year for decades, have been speaking about him. have been expressing themselves about the Mahatma and talking in glorious terms of the Rashtra-Pita. To the world, to our nation, and to vast majority of the people, Mahatma Gandhiji is Rashtra-Pita, the man who made India a nation, gave to it the dignity of nationhood and made it one among the comity of nations in this world. Then he is a Desha-Uddharaka, for he dedicated his life to the freeing of the nation from the shackles of foreign rule. Then, he is regarded as Swatantrta-Data. This way the nations honour him today for they look at Mahatmaji from the external view-point and know him

only as he appears to their vision and to their understanding.

But, then, what was Mahatmaji himself? Let us not consider what Mahatmaji was because of what he did to the nation, because of his relation to the external world and the peoples of India; but what he was by himself.

First and foremost he was an illustration of the saying "Muktimichhasichet Taata Vishayaan Vishavat Tyaja: Brahmacharyamahimsaam cha Satyam Peeyushavat Bhaja". He was a flame proceeding towards its source, the drop proceeding towards the ocean. He was a real Mumukshu. His whole life was one long urge to know the truth, to make himself one with the Ultimate Reality and free himself for ever. He was a real Mumukshu, a seeker after Truth.

Far more than anything else, Mahatmaji in himself was a great, glorious Satyavrati. Truth was to him, the very breath of his life.

Then, he was a Naishtika Brahmachari. To know Truth, he made himself the very essence of perfect purity and self-control. He was in himself the most ardent devotee and lover of the other great example or representative of Truth and purity which we have, viz, Maryada Purushottama, Lord Rama. If ever there was a great Ramapremi, next to Tulsidas it was Mahatmaji. The whole of his life was rooted upon his faith and

devotion to Ram, whom he considered as the very representation of the Eternal Truth, not in its limited personal aspect of a Prince; but Ram to him was the all-pervading immortal Truth or Essence.

Then we have in Mahatmaji the essential man of prayer. What does 'a man of prayer' represent? A man who continuously tries to put himself in tune with the Reality that is the Antaryamin; the Reality that pervades all, and the one unifying principle in all creatures; because prayer is an attempt at attunement to that one universal principle and every day Mahatmaji's life was an example of intense prayer through activities as well as through the actual prayer during his evening gatherings.

And he was a man who drew his strength from Ram Nam. He was a Ram-Nam-Sadhak and Gita-Sadhak. Gita-dharma which is said to be the very essence of the Upanishads, the very cream of the Upanishads, was the pattern which he gave to all his thought, his behaviour and his entire life. His entire life, inner and outer, was based upon the living philosophy of the Gita. Mahatmaji was Gita personified, Gita which is the very essence of the Upanishads, Upanishads in miniature. Therefore, we have before us Mahatmaji the Spirit, the individual who was nothing but a perfect personification of the spirit of the Upanishads, which is the central core of Bharatavarsha's culture.

Therefore, in Mahatmaji we have not merely a politician, not merely the father of the nation or the saviour of the nation, or the giver of freedom to India, but we have in Mahatmaji a seeker after Truth, a votary of Truth, one who adhered to Brahmacharya, a man of prayer, a man who based his entire life upon the philosophy of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, the essence of the Upanishads. He was one in whom Harishchandra, Nachiketas, Rama, Narada, Krishna, the sages of the Upanishads re-lived. We find Mahatma Gandhiji is the representative or the exemplar of the heart of India, the very vital life spark of India. The life-spark of India is spiritual life, spiritual striving and constant effort of the attainment of Truth. This is true India. India is Mumukshatwa. India is the attempt at realising Truth. In Mahatmaji we have this essence of Indian culture personified, the spirit of the Upanishads personified.

We have this day gathered together here to bring into our life, to our remembrance, this great embodiment of the inner heart-culture of Bharatavarsha, this great embodiment of the spirit of the Upanishads, this great embodiment of Truth, which is enshrined in the Upanishads.

Mahatmaji is the spark of that Great Transcendental Blaze of Sat or Reality or Ultimate Truth; and in this aspect, he is ever there, shining as the beaconlight to every aspirant, every son of India, every seeker after Truth so that we may inspire ourselves with the truth of

this great personality embodying the Ultimate Truth, and thus we shall remember him with reverence. Today we shall try once again to fill ourselves with the great spirit which Mahatmaji embodied and we must, all of us, ever try to look at things in the aspect of things as they actually are. Then alone shall we find the real gold which is hidden inside the ore. Mahatmaji to us is a Light which should be a constant guiding factor in our inner life. It is a light which has not gone away with the death of the physical sheath that enshrined it. Mahatmaji to us is not a person whose life, actions and achievements we are to recall and to whom we pay our gratitude. Mahatmaji to us is a living spirit, a reality that is vital to this moment and shall always continue to be vital in order to inspire thousands and thousands, who are seekers of the Great Reality which made itself manifest in his personality and which expressed itself through his perfect and lofty character. This eternal light shall continue to shine for ever and today we once again bask ourselves in the radiance of this great light. Let us absorb this great light into ourselves so that our inner consciousness may also be illumined and we shall also be able to shine forth as more effective sparks of that Great Flame.

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## SRI AUROBINDO GHOSH

### Birth and Parentage

On Thursday, the 15th August, 1871, at about 5 a.m. Sri Aurobindo was born of Sri Krishnadhan and Swarnalata, at Calcutta, in Bengal, in a reputed Ghosh family of Konnagar. Sri Krishnadhan went to England and returned an M.D., full of honours.

Raj Narayan Bose, an acknowledged leader in Bengal literature, a writer in the "Modern Review", the grandfather of Indian Nationalism, was Sri Aurobindo's maternal grandfather. Aurobindo owes not only his rich spiritual nature, but even his very superior literary capacity to his mother's line.

### The Classical Scholar

Aurobindo was sent to the Loretto Convent School at Darjeeling when he was four years old. As a boy Aurobindo received his early education in a public school in England. The old head-master of the school observed "Of all the boys who passed through his hands during the last 25 or 30 years, Aurobindo was by far and alone the most richly endowed with intellectual capacity."

From this school he went to King's College, Cambridge, where he distinguished himself a student of European

classics and passed the Indian Civil Service Examination with great credit, in 1890. Failing however, to stand the required test in horsemanship, he was not allowed to enter the Covenantal Service of the Indian Government. But returning to India, he became the Vice-Principal of the State college in Baroda. He was held in great respect by the Maharajah.

His scholarship soon attracted the notice of all. He was loved by the educated classes in the State. He was exceedingly popular with the general public. Mr. K. M. Munshi was one of his students. He admired and loved Aurobindo. To the younger generation Aurobindo had become a veritable God and by them he was called as "*Aru Da*" meaning "elder brother Aurobindo". He married Mrinalini Devi.

He was an accomplished scholar in Greek. He got high distinction in Latin. He learnt French very well and picked up a little of German and Italian to study Goethe and Dante in the original. He was steeped in the lore of our ancient Vedic Scriptures.

Sri Aurobindo was a genius in history and poetry, a scholar in English and Latin. He was in England for 14 years. When he was only seven years of age, Dr. K. D. Ghosh sent him to England to be steeped in Western education. That early age was chosen deliberately in order that Aurobindo might forget the native touch and learn to adopt the Western forms instead.

### Apostle of Indian Nationalism

It was in 1893 that he came back to India. He drew a salary of Rs. 750/- in the Baroda Educational Service. From 1893 to 1906 he drank deep from the fountains of Sanskrit and Bengali literature, philosophy and political science. He resigned his job and joined the Bengal National College, on a salary of Rs. 150/-. He plunged headlong into the terrorist movement. He was a great figure in the anarchist movements of the time.

Aurobindo edited the English Daily, "*Bande Mataram*", wrote fearless and pointed editorials. During the next few months he started the English Weekly, "*Dharma*". He spread his message, "Our ideal of Swaraj is absolute Autonomy, absolute Self-rule, free from foreign control." In those days, he openly advocated the boycott of British goods, British courts and everything British. He always asked the people to prepare themselves for Passive Resistance.

Sri Aurobindo, the prophet of Indian Nationalism was in the forefront of the National struggle during the days of the partition of Bengal. For a year he was an undertrial prisoner, in solitary confinement in the Alipore Central Jail. He utilised this period for an intense study and practice of the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. Chittaranjan Das defended Sri Aurobindo, who was acquitted after a memorable trial. Sri Aurobindo was the first apostle of Indian Independence. The spirit of self-sacrifice

and his high character were praiseworthy. Politics and poetry were very dear to Sri Aurobindo. He was one of the pioneers of political awakening in India. He was the leader of revolutionary movement. He had played a great part in the country's national struggle since 1908.

### **Awakened to the Divine Mission**

The famous Alipore Bomb Case was the turning point of Sri Aurobindo's life and it was in a dingy cell of the Alipore jail that he dreamt the dream of his future life, the Divine Mission ordained for him by God.

He bore the rigours of the imprisonment, the bad food, the inadequate clothes, the lack of light and free air, the strain of boredom and the creeping solitariness of the gloomy cell.

### **His Practice of Yoga**

Sri Aurobindo began his Yoga in 1904. He had no helper or Guru in Yoga till he met Lele, a Mahratti Yogi in Baroda and that was only for a short time. Meditating only for 3 days with Lele he followed his instructions for silencing the mind and freeing it from the constant pressure of thought.

Sri Aurobindo himself once wrote in a letter about his practice of Yoga, "I began my Yoga in 1904 without a Guru. In 1908 I received important help from a Mahratti Yogi and discovered the foundations of my Sadhana." He

started Yoga by himself, getting the rule from a friend, a disciple of Brahmananda of Ganga Mutt. It was confined at first to assiduous practice of pranayam, for six or more hours a day. He practised and meditated on the teachings of Gita and Upanishads.

### Ashram at Pondichery

Sri Aurobindo migrated from Calcutta to Chandranagar and later reached Pondichery in April, 4, 1910, where he first stayed at a friend's place. He lived here at first with 4 or 5 companions. Gradually the members increased. An ashram grew up around him. Now there are 600 inmates in the Ashram accomodated in about hundred houses. The Ashramites are engaged in various activities connected with the Ashram—some in the dairy, some in the vegetable garden, yet others in the laundry and the small bakery. Most of the young girls work at the Ashram's own printing press. All activities form a part of their Sadhana. Here life is an undivided whole and not consisting of water-tight compartments.

The Ashram has a school of its own. Here stress is laid on physical culture. Vocational education is imparted to the pupils between the ages of 14 and 18.

In 1920 a French lady, Mira, wife of Paul Richard, who was imbued with the same ideal, joined the Sri Aurobindo circle. She became the Mother. Every morning she gives Darshan to the eager devotees from the balcony adjoining

her room. The Mother presides over the Ashram.

The Ashramites are not Sannyasins. Aurobindo himself was not a Sannyasi but a Rishi.

The Ashram is a cosmopolitan one. There are Christians, Zoroastrians, Muslims and members of other creeds.

Aurobindo gave Darshan to his devotees on four days a year.

All the activities of the Ashram are managed by the Sadhaks. The Mother supervises every little item of the organisation of the Ashram.

The Ashram started the "*Arya*" an English spiritual journal under the management of Mother and Paul Richard. The most significant works of Aurobindo appeared serially, "A Defence of Indian Culture" "The Renaissance in India", "Isa Upanishad", "The Secret of the Vedas", "Essays on Gita", "The Life Divine" "The Synthesis of Yoga" and "The Psychology of Social development." The *Arya* was stopped after six and half years.

Sri Rabindranath Tagore said to Aurobindo when he visited the Ashram "You have the word and we are waiting to accept it from you. India will speak through your voice to the world 'Hearken to me'. Years ago I saw you in the atmosphere of your early heroic youth, and sang to you "*Aurobindo, accept the salutation from Rabindranath*".

### His Philosophy

Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is in a sense practical. It is based on facts, experience and personal realisations and on having the vision of a seer or Rishi. His spirituality is inseparably united with reason.

The goal aimed at by Sri Aurobindo was not merely the liberation of the individual from the chain that fetters him but "to work out the will of the Divine in the world, to effect a spiritual transformation and to bring down the divine nature and a divine life into the mental, vital and physical nature and life of humanity."

"A fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a Supreme Grace that answers from above are two powers which in their conjunction can effect this. If the transformation is to be integral, integral should be the rejection of all that withstands it" says the Master Sri Aurobindo.

"The call upon us" said Sri Aurobindo, "is to grow into the image of God, to dwell in Him and with Him and be a channel of His joy and might and an instrument of His works. Purified from all that is Asubha (evil), we have to act in the world as dynamos of that Divine Electricity and send it thrilling and radiating through mankind, so that wherever one of us stands, hundreds around may become full of His light and force, full of God and full of Ananda. Churches, theologies, philosophies have

failed to save mankind because they have buried themselves with intellectual creeds, and institutions.....as if these could save mankind and have neglected the one thing needful, the power and purification of the soul."

His "Life Divine," is and will always remain a force guiding the thoughts of men all over the world. His other publications are "Essays on Gita", "Ideal and Progress," "Isa Upanishad", "The Superman", "Evolution", "Heraclitus", "The Ideal of the Karmayogin", "The Brain of India", "The Renaissance in India", "Bases of Yoga", Kalidasa", "Vikramorvasi or The Hero and the Nymph", "Poems", "The Riddle of This World" etc.

### The Sage's Maha Samadhi

Sri Aurobindo passed away at 1.30 a.m. on December 5th at Pondichery. He was 78 years old. He was suffering from kidney trouble for a fortnight and was attended by Dr. Prabhakar Sen.

One more glorious child of Mother India has laid himself to rest in Her bosom. One more lamp that has shed its light of divine wisdom throughout the world has disappeared in its own lustre, even as camphor dissolves into the fire. Sri Aurobindo has attained Union with Sri Aravinda—the lotus-eyed Lord of the Universe.

Sri Aurobindo was a poet, politician and philosopher. His writings—philosophic and poetic are Indian in spirit

and Western in rhythm and color. He was the greatest intellectual of our age and a major force for the life of spirit. India will not forget his services to politics and philosophy. The world will remember with gratitude his invaluable works in the realms of philosophy and religion.

He was one of the greatest world figures. He was an inspiration of the Nationalist of India. As a religious teacher his writings will live as long as the world survives.

The crest-jewel of nascent India, the bravest among the patriots, the sharpest among intellectuals, and subtlest among the seers, Sri Aurobindo fulfilled the glorious purpose of demonstrating to the world that Real India, the India of the Vedic Seers, can survive and absorb into herself all alien cultures, and that at the hands of one who knows the proper synthesis of Eastern and Western Cultures can find their happy blend, without having necessarily antagonise the other. Sri Aurobindo's Life Divine—the Divine Life that he lived and preached—will live for ever, inspiring mankind. Posterity will hail him as a member of the galaxy of Vedic seers. May His Light ever shine.

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## MAHARISHI AUROBINDO

Blessed Immortal Self,

Today we have received the news of the passing, into the Infinite, of a great soul, a beacon-light to striving seekers and one of the gems in the firmament of Indian spirituality.

Maharishi Arabindo was a great sage whose life has been a standing monument of spiritual inspiration for all humanity and specially for the vast number of seekers in India for more than half a century. And, today as a solemn commemoration of his final parting into the state of Satchidananda, let us dwell for a few minutes upon the great life of this sage, his ideal and his attainments.

The spiritual vision of Arabindo could be summed up as the vision that has been referred to in the Gita in the words *Vaasudeva Sarvam Iti*. His vision was *Yatcha kinchit jagat sarvam drishyate sruyate apiva antar bahischa tat sarvam vyaapya Narayana sthithah, Purusha eva idam sarvam yad bhutam yat cha bhavyam*. And, this vision it was that was the turning point of the life of Arabindo. And, his life is specially of great significance and inspiration to all seekers and to those of

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A Speech delivered by Sri Swami Chidanandaji on the day, Sri Aurobindo attained Mahasamadhi.

this century in that it stood as a towering monument to the fact that the greatest of all achievements in human life is ultimately the achievement of spiritual realisation.

And, it is a most typical example that Arabindo's life gives us that nothing in this world, however great and however prized it may be in the view of the indiscriminating man, nothing in this world can satisfy the real urge for the Infinite in man. For, Arabindo was a man who had the highest possible honours in this life. He was a man who had the greatest distinction in every walk of life. He was brought up for a large part of his boyhood in England. He received the best English education in English public schools and in an English University. And, to crown all this educational distinction he became an I.C.S. Returning as an I.C.S. he served under a King, under a native ruler in a very honourable and high capacity. And, after this, he turned to politics and achieved wonderful distinction as an inspiring patriot and leader. And, despite all these achievements which would have been enough to make a man satisfied with his temporal life and get bound to earthly ambitions, Arabindo showed that the true spirit of Indian culture, the ancient urge which was the prime element in the heart of every son of Bharatavarsha was still intact, vital and fiery in him. Therefore, this urge manifested itself. Not the lure of I.C.S. degrees, not the lure of a great position in the native State, not the lure of leadership in the political field, could deter him from the spiritual path

when once the urge became manifest. And we see Arabindo casting aside all these worldly vanities and turning towards the Infinite, the Eternal, the real Goal of every son of India. Thus, the leader in the temporal life became a recluse and a seeker and for the past nearly more than 40 years we have in Arabindo, a phenomenon of all earthly ambitions being sacrificed at the call of the Spirit, from the Eternal. And, thus Arabindo became a Sage. Thus, Arabindo became a symbol of the real Indian culture. He became the symbol of the essence of the Bharatian ideal which was always a striving towards the Spirit, and not the mundane slavery to things of this earth, however high and however valued they may be in the eyes of the common man. Thus he has been for more than 40 or 50 years a great and inspiring symbol of the essence of our culture which is the Upanishad, which is the call towards the Infinite, towards Satchidananda, towards Eternal bliss. And this symbol now has passed away from the external field.

But it is assuredly enshrined in the heart of every Indian and every seeker. For, this symbol was only an outward representation of an inward urge which is part and parcel of every son, every descendant of the ancient Upanishadic seers. Thus we have in Arabindo, a call, a challenge; an eternal reminder of the fact that the ultimate aim of every son of India is not wealth, not progeny, not earthly achievements; but it is ever and ever shall be the spiritual attainment of Satchidananda. Na Karmāna

na prajaya dhanena tyagenaike amritatvamanashuh was exemplified in Arabindo's life. And, we shall always remember this and upon this solemn occasion when he has left the earthly coil and ascended to the Infinite, we shall write this pledge that India shall always have this ideal, this spiritual attainment ever before us and we shall be striving for this every day of our life.

## SRI RAMANA MAHARISHI

Sri Ramana Maharishi was born on 30th December 1879. He was known as Venkataraman. Born in a pious middle class Brahmin family he went to a mission school and learnt a little English.

### Flight From Home

On the 29th of August 1896, he left his home in the District of Madura, in search of his Father Lord Arunachala to whom he reported himself on the 1st of September 1896, thus:

*O Lord, obedient to Thy call  
Here have I come, deserting all,  
No boon I ask, no loss bemoan,  
Take me in and make me Thine own.*

From that day to date, he has made Arunachala (Tiruvannamalai) his abode, transmitting through Mouna, the golden language of his ego-less state, the Message of Eternal Truth to the four corners of the globe.

He left a note behind to his rebuking brother, "I have, in search of my father, according to His command, started from this place. On a virtuous enterprise indeed, I have this day embarked. Therefore for this action none

need grieve, nor trace this one. No money need be spent for my search."

### The Great Enlightenment

"It was about six weeks (in the middle of the year 1896)" said Sri Ramana Maharishi, when asked by devotees, as to how he was transformed, "before I left Madura for good that the great change in my life took place. It was so sudden. One day I sat up alone on the first floor of my uncle's house. I was in my usual good health. But a sudden and unmistakable fear of death seized me. I felt I was going to die and at once set about thinking what I should do. I did not care to consult any one, be he a doctor, elder or friend. I felt I had to solve the problem myself then and there. The shock of the fear of death made me at once introspective or "introverted". I said to myself mentally i.e., without uttering the words, "Now death is come, what does it mean? Who is it that is dying? This body dies; I at once dramatised the situation. I extended my limbs and held them rigid, as though *rigor-mortis* had set in. I imitated a corpse to lend an air of reality to my further investigation. I held my breath and kept my mouth closed, pressing the lips tightly together, so that no sound could escape. 'Well then' said I to myself, 'this body is dead. It will be carried still to the crematory and there burnt and reduced to ashes. But with the death of my body am "I" dead? Is the body "I"? This body is silent and inert. But I am still aware of the full force of my personality and even of the sound of "I" within myself

as apart from the body. The material body dies, but the Spirit transcending it cannot be touched by death. I am therefore the deathless Spirit.' All this was not a feat of intellectual gymnastics, but came as a flash before me vividly as living Truth, which I perceived immediately, without any argument almost. "I" was something very real, the only real thing in that state, and all the conscious activity that was connected with my body was centred on that. The "I" or myself was holding the focus of attention with a powerful fascination. Fear of Death vanished at once and for ever. The absorption in the Self has continued from that moment right up to now."

#### Tapas of Maharishi

Sri Ramana practised tapas in the thousand-pillared Mandapam, near the Patala linga, Subramanya's shrine, Mango garden, Sadguru Swami cave and Cora hills. From 1909 to 1916 he lived in the Virupakshi Cave.

During his days of tapas, mischievous boys pelted stones at him and hurled tiles, and yet Ramana was ever peaceful and calm through the strength of meditation and penance.

Ramana Maharishi was known as Brahmana Swami in Tiruvannamalai. Sri Kavya Kanti Ganapathy Sastri, the great Sanskrit scholar, came to his Ashram in 1908 and stayed with him, and wrote Ramana Gita.

The life of the Maha Rishi was one continued medita-

tion, Ananda Anubhavam. He established peace within. He lived in the light of the Lord within. He encouraged others to do the same thing. To him, all the world was one.

Maharishi seldom talked, and whenever he did speak, he did so only because it was absolutely necessary.

### His Divine Message

Sri Ramana is a living example of the teaching of the Upanishads. His life is at once the message and the philosophy of his teachings. He spoke to the hearts of men.

The great Maharishi found Himself within himself, and then gave out to the world the grand but simple message of his great life, "Know Thyself". All else will be known to thee of its own accord."

"Discriminate between the undying, unchanging, all-pervading, infinite Atma and the ever-changing, phenomenal and perishable universe and body. Enquire, "Who am I?" Make the mind calm. Free yourself from all thoughts other than the simple thought of the Self or Atma. Dive deep into the chambers of your heart. Find out the real, infinite "I". Rest there peacefully for ever and become identical with the Supreme Self." This is the gist of the philosophy and teachings of Sri Ramana Maharishi.

Sri Ramana says, "The world is so unhappy because it is ignorant of the true Self."

“Man’s real nature is happiness. Happiness is inborn in the true Self. His search for happiness is an unconscious search for his true Self. The true Self is imperishable; therefore, when a man finds it, he finds a happiness which does not come to an end.”

“In the interior of the cavity of the Heart, the One Supreme Being is ever glowing with the Self-conscious emanation “I—I”. To realise Him, enter into the Heart with one-pointed mind, by quest within or diving deep, or control of breath and abide with the Self of self.”

Sri Ramana’s “Who am I ?,” “Upadesa Saram”, “Ullathu Narpathu” are pearls of direct wisdom, expressed in aphoristic terseness.

Sri B.V. Narasimha Swami, President of All India Sai Samaj, has published a thrilling life of Ramana, entitled “Self-Realisation.” Yogi Suddhananda Bharati has written the life of Sri Ramana in Tamil.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi has set at naught the prattle of materialists that Self-realisation and Samadhi are things of the remote past, and that in the present age, they are impossible of achievement to man. He has shown by his life-long Samadhi that it is still possible to realise the Supreme, and live in that realisation.

Beloved aspirants ! Take heart. Gird up your loins. Apply yourself intensely to Yoga Sadhana. You

will soon attain Videha Kaivalya and shine for ever as an illumined sage.

**The Light Shines Brighter Than Ever**

Lieut.-Col. P. V. Karamchandani, I.M.S., D.M.O., North Arcot Dist., attended on Sri Ramana when he suffered from sarcoma, a kind of malignant tumour, in his upper left arm above the elbow. He was four times operated.

A meteor hit the sky at 8-47 p.m. on 14th April, 1950, when Maharishi left his mortal coil and entered Maha Samadhi.

The all-pervading Light which shone through the embodiment of that Light in Maharishi Ramana has once again resolved itself into its original state. A life-long proof of the Upanishads was what we called Maharishi Ramana; that proof will for ever exist, reassuring us of the Ultimate Reality.

The Saint is no more in his mortal frame. But the Light of his Soul is now merged in every receptive individual soul. Maharishi Ramana lives in our heart. His passing away should not be grieved for. For, he had fulfilled the Mission of his Life—he had achieved the highest goal, Self-realisation. So, there is nothing to grieve for. The death of only those, that are not able to achieve the goal of life or do their duty has any reason to be mourned. The Light of the Maharishi's soul shines to-day brighter than ever.

In the heart of humanity the Saint shall live for ever, guiding, encouraging, goading and inspiring, so that, millions and millions might seek and find the Great Truth that Ramana realised.

Too well did he expound the Vedanta Philosophy, not through bookish knowledge, but by practical experience. His teachings imported through all-absorbing 'Silence' embodied the highest ideals and the ultimate reaches in Divine Realisation. To ever assert one's latent Divinity, to ever strive to live in the consciousness of the immortal Self and to remain as an unaffected witness of the transitory phases of life, immersed in that Supreme Silence—was the clarion call of the Maharishi. Dogmas and religious prejudices he cared not for! for, he was far above those mundane limitations. With him lived orthodox Brahmin priests, Moslems and Christians and the so-called Indian untouchables. They were all alike to him.

As an Architect-Supreme of Truth- transcendental, he led and now leads on the weary travellers on earth towards the Goal through his unfathomable Silence.

To pay the most befitting homage to that Saintly personality is to follow his teachings and to grow up in that Ideal Model.

May Peace be unto all!

## SAINT GUDIDI BABA

Saint Gudidi Baba was one of the greatest Siddhas of Bharata Varsha who lived in recent times. He saved many a youth from becoming an atheist. He showed by his own wonderful miracles the power and strength of spiritual glory. To those who would laugh in utter disregard and consider the Sastras as mere trash literature written by ancient men of India, he showed by the strength of his own spiritual powers how true and reliable they were. He saved many young men from the clutches of materialism. He was a Siddha Mahatma. He could get in his own hands things which were distant from him by thousands of miles. He had a perfect knowledge of herbs and medicines. This great Mahatma blessed our Motherland till recently. He left his mortal coil on the 6th March, 1951.

Thirty years ago this saint first came to Pilkhuva when he had only one Gudidi (a light covering with a small quantity of cotton enclosed within). In that covering there were a number of variegated pieces of clothes in different colours stitched together. He had with him a small vessel and a bamboo shell. This shell he utilised for drinking water or milk. Full with the divine consciousness he would use the same bamboo shell as an instrument to sing songs. He had no other possession with him. He

could sing well the songs of Kabir, Nanak, Tulsidas, Dadu, and other saints. He would take his hearers to the state of trance by his beautiful music and Bhajans. In those days Pilkhuva was the centre of Arya Samajists and Congress people. Every week there were meetings where they condemned idol worship and Sanatan Dharma. They condemned Sraddhas, Tarpan and Brahmins. Then Babaji was observing Mouna. He talked to none. But sometimes he would loudly laugh, sometimes repeat some songs in ecstasy and at other times he kept silent. Sometimes he spoke of Krishna Bhakti and sometimes he would speak of Vedanta—Kevala Advaita. He used to say often, "There is no second person. I am there alone. Who is to speak to whom? Ham Na Tum Darbar Gum."

Once he beckoned a few Rajput children to him. He was then staying in one Siva Temple. The children ran to him then removed a few threads from his Gudidi and gave one to each boy. He then asked them to close their hands. They all closed. Then he asked them to open their hands. To their surprise they saw almonds, dried grapes, sugarcandy etc. They all ate them gladly.

No one knew about his name, age, caste or order. He had always with him a Gudidi and so he was known as Gudidi Baba. But his face was shining with glow and showed him to be a youth of 30. Even when he first came to Pilkhuva he was in a similar condition. Many people attributed many things to him. Some said he was a hundred years old and so on. Whenever he came to the town,

thousands of people thronged round him for Darshan. Even unbelievers flocked to him as days passed on. He used to call himself Shahanshah, meaning the Emperor. He had no desires. He had no worry. He did not care for anything. He wanted nothing from anyone. He had a small loin cloth (Langoti). He took food without salt. The Lord dwelt in him and he dwelt in the Lord. Before such a saint even Indra was nothing.

In his spiritual fervour he used to sing, "Nanak Dukhia Sab Sansara, Sukhia vahi jo naam aadhara" meaning everyone in this world is miserable but he who had the Names of the Lord was very happy." Very often he would hold his hands up and in his hands came bunches of grapes and all the people round him ate them with great joy.

With all these some atheists took him to be a magician. They said, "This man is a rogue. He indulges in magic and cheats his devotees. Once there was a great crowd around him. One devotee brought a glass of milk for him. He poured the milk in his bamboo vessel. Lo! to the surprise of all there was no milk there but the vessel was full of grapes. A few of them he gave to the men who brought the milk. All the opponents remained dumb at this wonderful incident.

In one day's gathering there were a number of non-believers. They denied God and everything Godly. Swamiji asked one of them to bring a glass of milk for

him. One from the group brought him a glass of milk. He drank it pouring it in his bamboo vessel. He then gave back the glass. Babaji asked the man who brought him milk to shake the empty glass. The man who was asked to shake the glass was a non-believer in God. He obeyed and shook the glass three or four times. He then heard the sound of a rupee. Babaji then asked him to shake it again and Lo! there was another rupee. Thus he was asked to shake the vessel five times and there were five rupees. Baba said, "Pay the cost of milk with this." The audience were struck with wonder.

Once Gudidi Baba stayed with Mahatma Sri Atma-ramji Maharaj in his kutir. This attracted a very big crowd in his Kutir. Sri Sobharamji, B.A.B.T. and another teacher who was a No. 1 disbeliever in God came to see the Maharaj. They requested him to show them something very wonderful. Babaji in all humility said that he knew nothing about what the people were propagating about him. When pressed very hard, the Babaji asked them what they wanted to see. They said that they wanted Kandahar pomegranate if he could get it for them. It was a time when pomegranate was not at all available anywhere. In a few minutes he got a handkerchief with a pomegranate. He raised his hands and caught it. All were struck with wonder. They all tasted the pomegranate and it was the best variety. It was available only in Kandahar.

On another occasion some children gathered round

him and wanted they should be given almonds. In a moment the Baba showed his hands up and got them which he distributed to all. A certain boy began to cry and say, "I do not want almonds. I want only Peda" which the Babaji got for the boy in a moment by showing his hands up.

On another occasion Lala Jagannath was going to Gaziabad on a court mission. Then Babaji approached him and asked him to give him a soap and oil for his bath. He said that he was going on an urgent business and so could not stop even a moment. Then Babaji put his hand in a well near-by and lo ! at once a big piece of soap and a bottle full of oil came up. Seeing which all were wonderstruck. He then took a nice bath.

Once Babaji went to Khurja. There he was acquainted with none. There was a cremation ground nearby. Babaji went and stayed there with the body smeared with ashes all round. He saw some of the college boys were passing that way. He showed his hands up and he got a lot of pomegranates, almonds etc., which he distributed to the boys and the whole elite of the city was attracted there in a minute.

Gudidi Babaji had a full knowledge of medicines too. He knew a number of medicines and cured people in a wonderful way. He extracted oil out of sulphur. On another occasion some of the people in the village tried to extract oil out of sulphur but they could not. Then

Babaji came there and helped them in getting oil. When questioned he said, you have to combine Mantra, Tantra and the best medical herbs.

Babaji helped so many vaidyas in the preparation of very difficult medicines. He knew the method to solidify mercury and to make use of it in moving from place to place in the sky.

Once a devotee approached him asking blessings for a son. Then Babaji gave him Swarna Bhasma (golden ashes) by taking which he was blessed with a son. Doctors remained dumbfounded when they saw the proficiency of Babaji in dealing with certain case which were incurable for them.

He frequented Pilkhuva for nearly thirty years but he never took food with any devotee. He had very rigid vows.

Babaji came to Pilkhuva in February 1951. He said, "My body has become old now. This wants a change. Long have I lived in this body. Now I like to leave this body. This body is perishable. This will not serve me long." Later Babaji became very sick and he was taken to Meerut. He told everyone that he would leave the body very soon and to some devoted disciples he hinted the day and time also. This became true. He was being taken to Meerut and on the way he left his body in the motor car before reaching Meerut. His body was then consigned to Mother Ganges at Garhmukteswar.

### CHAPTER III

#### ANCIENT SAGES

#### THE STORY OF JAIGISAVYA

The revered sage Jaigisavya had acquired the direct perception of the reactions and hence he had a clear knowledge of all the modifications during ten Great Cycles, and then Discrimination discernment became manifested to him; thereupon the revered sage Avatya creating a body for himself said to Jaigisavya—“During all these ten Great Cycles, on account of your purity, your mind has been untrammelled, hence you have been perceiving all the suffering that is undergone in hells and in animal bodies; and you yourself, have been born again and again in celestial and human bodies; now, as between pleasure and pain, which one did you experience to a greater extent?” Jaigisavya thus replied to the sage Avatya—“While I was passing through the ten Great Cycles, on account of purity, my mind was untrammelled, and hence I perceived the sufferings undergone in hells and in animal bodies; and while

myself born among the divine beings among men, whatever I experienced I regard that as pain only." Thereupon the sage Avatya said—"You, dear child, have acquired full mastery over Primordial Matter, and you have also attained unsurpassed happiness of contentment; is all this also included in the category of Pain?" Then sage Jaigisavya replied—"What you have described as the unsurpassed happiness of contentment, that is so only as compared to the pleasure described from sense-objects; as compared to isolation however, that happiness also is only pain. Because after all it is only a property of the Mind and as such it consists of the three Attributes and all that partakes of the nature of the three Attributes has been relegated (by the wise) to the category of what should be warded off; and yet it has been spoken of as 'happiness' in the sense that the meshes of desire constitute Pain, and when this pain in the shape of the meshes of senses disappears, the man experiences a high degree of pleasure, clear, untrammelled and entirely agreeable."

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## SAGE YAJNAVALKYA

The name of Yajnavalkya of Mithila stands distinguished both in the Srutis and the Smritis. He is specially known for his unsurpassed spiritual wisdom and power. The seer of a Veda Samhita from Bhagavan Surya, the revealer of Brahma Jnana to Janaka, Maitreyi and others, Yajnavalkya hails supreme among sages of sacred memory. As to his obtaining the Shukla Yajurveda Samhita from Bhagavan Surya, there is the following history:

Yajnavalkya was the son of the sister of Mahamuni Vaishampayana, the Vedacharya of the Taittiriya section. He was studying the Taittiriya Samhita from Vaishampayana who was also his Guru. Vaishampayana had many other disciples too, who were all students of the Taittiriya Shakha.

Once, all the Rishis decided to form an association near the Meru mountain and made a rule that any Rishi who would absent himself therein at the appointed hour shall incur the sin of Brahmahatya (killing of a Brahmin) for seven days. On that particular day fell the Shraddha (death) ceremony of Vaishampayana's father. Vaishampayana thought, "Somehow I have to perform my father's

ceremony. If the sin of Brahmahatya comes to me, my disciples will observe the expiatory penance therefor." So Vaishampayana could not attend the meeting of the Rishis. And accordingly he incurred the sin of Brahmahatya.

Then, Vaishampayana said to his disciples. "Now I have to expiate this great sin of Brahmahatya. Therefore, you all will observe, for my sake, an expiatory penance for seven days."

At once Yajnavalkya stood up and said "O Guru! All these are poor-spirited young students. They will not be able to undergo such a hard penance. So instead of all, I myself alone shall observe it in the manner in which nobody else can." Vaishampayana told Yajnavalkya not to undertake it alone. But Yajnavalkya persisted. The preceptor was offended at this audacious attitude of the disciple, and said. "O proud one, you are very conceited. You get away from me. Enough of you who is disposed to despise wise Brahmins. Give back to me immediately whatever you have learnt from me."

At the order of the Guru, Yajnavalkya, the son of Devarata, vomited out the collection of the Yajus in the form of food. The other disciples ate that food taking the form of the Tittiri birds, because they were very eager to receive the same. They, then, had the direct revelation of those Yajurveda collections. As the Tittiri

birds ate this Veda, it is thenceforth called the Taittiriya Yajurveda or Krishna (black) Yajurveda on account of its being the vomited substance.

Then Yajnavalkya determined not to have any human Guru thereafter. Thus he began to propitiate the Sun-God, Surya. Yajnavalkya worshipped and extolled the Sun, the master of the Vedas, for the purpose of acquiring the fresh Vedic portions not known to his preceptor, Vaishampayana.

Yajnavalkya said "Prostration to the glorious Aditya who in the form of the Atman abides in all beings. I bow to Him who surrounds all like Akasa, who is one and not separated or distanced by limiting conditions. O Great God, O creator I contemplate upon that glowing sphere which lights and warms the whole world! O God who burns all miseries wrought by unrighteous activities, who burns ignorance which is the seed of activity! O Lord, I worship Thy lotus-like feet praised and worshipped by the rulers of the three worlds. Give me those portions of the Veda which are not known to others."

The Sun-God, the glorious Lord Hari, pleased with his penance, assumed the form of a horse and taught the sage such fresh portions of Yajur-Veda as were not known to any other. This Veda goes by the name of "Sukla", "Madhyandina," "Kanva or Vajasaneya" Yajur-Veda. Yajnavalkya divided this Veda into fifteen branches each comprising hundreds of Yajus Mantras. Kanva,

Madhyandina and others learnt those branches of the Vajasaneeya (so called because it was evolved in great rapidity by Surya in the form of a horse through his manes).

Yajnavalkya married two wives, one was Maitreyi and the other Katyayani. Of these Maitreyi was a Brahnavadini. When Yajnavalkya wished to divide his property between the two wives before his starting for the fourth Ashrama of his life, Maitreyi asked whether she could become immortal through wealth. Yajnavalkya replied that there was no hope of immortality through wealth and that she would only become one among the many who were well-to-do on earth. On hearing this, Maitreyi requested Yajnavalkya to teach her what he considered as the best. Then Yajnavalkya elaborately described to her the sole greatness of the Absolute Self, the nature of Its Existence, the way of attaining Infinite Knowledge and Immortality etc. This immortal conversation between Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi is recorded in the Brihadaranyakopanishad. The central theme of the discourse is this. "All things are dear, not for their sake, but for the sake of the Self. This self alone exists everywhere. It cannot be understood or known for It alone is the Understander and the Knower. Its nature cannot be said to be positively as such. It is realised through endless denials as 'not this, not this'. The Self is self-luminous, indestructible, unthinkable".

The other wife Katyayani, the daughter of Bhara-dwaja, was of common intelligence, and through her Yajnavalkya had three sons. Chandrakanta, Mahamegha, and Vijaya.

Yajnavalkya, though a great Brahman, was a great Karmkandi too. He caused many Yajnas to be performed and himself became the Acharya of those great Yajnas. He was a celebrated Srotriya and a Brahmanishtha Guru. Once King Janaka of Videha wanted to know from which real Brahmanishtha to receive Brahman-vidya. In order to find out who was the real Brahmanishtha, Janaka performed a huge "Bahudakshina" sacrifice at which all the Rishis from far and wide were invited. And he offered one thousand cows with their calves, all their horns being decked with enormous gold. Then he proclaimed to the assembled ones "Whosoever is the best Brahmana amongst you may drive these cows". None dared to get up and take away the cows as they were afraid of censure by others. But Yajnavalkya stood up and asked his disciple Samasravas to drive the cows home.

The other Brahmanas got angry at this and said to one another "How can he declare himself to be the best Brahmanas among us?" Thereupon several Rishis challenged Yajnavalkya with many questions on transcendental matters to all of which Yajnavalkya gave prompt reply. There was a great debate in which

Yajnavalkya won over all others. Janaka was convinced that Yajnavalkya was the best Brahmanishtha and received Brahmavidya from him thereafter.

The whole of the third and the fourth chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, abounds with the great philosophical teachings of Yajnavalkya. Yajnavalkya was also the author of the famous "Yajnavalkya Smriti". "Yajnavalkya Sakha." "Pratijna Sutra", "Satapatha Brahmana," and "Yoga-Yajnavalkya".

At the sacrifice of Janaka there was an exchange of a few words between Yajnavalkya and Vaishampayana. But on hearing that Yajnavalkya had obtained a fresh Veda from the Sun-God. Vaishampayana was much pleased and requested Yajnavalkya to teach that Veda to his own disciples also. Yajnavalkya consented and taught his Veda to the disciples of Vaishampayana.

In the end, Yajnavalkya took Vidvat Sanyasa and retired to the forest.

Yajnavalkya was one of the greatest sages ever known. We find him arguing with and overcoming even his teacher Uddalaka at the court of Janaka. His precepts as contained in the Upanishads stand foremost as the crest-jewel of the highest teachings on Brahmavidya.



## ADDENDA

संस्कृत

## APPAYYA DIKSHITAR

Time and again in the history of a country there rise up figures of considerable interest and importance in respect of moral sincerity, religious zeal and scholarly erudition. They attain gigantic proportions and are acclaimed as incarnations of an element of Godhead. Appayya Dikshitar was such an outstanding figure in the history of South Indian scholarship. He was a marvel of learning, in width and depth and catholicity and had remarkable powers of clear thought and forcible expression. He was born in 1551 and died in 1634 A.D. Appayya Dikshitar combined in himself the clear-sightedness of the philosopher with the devotion and zeal of the devotee. His catholic tastes were shown in his deep single-minded devotion to Siva as his *Upasya murti*: but he would not like sectarian devotees pulling down Vishnu to the level of a Jiva. As an Advaitin he held the view that Brahman was Nirguna, but he also held that for the facility of human comprehension, God appears as if possessing gunas taking the form of the blue-throated, three-eyed being accompanied by Amba. Though the bedrock of the Vedas, Agamas etc. is Advaita, the fragrance of Advaita dawns

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By Sri A. S. Natarajier, M.A., M.L., Research Scholar, Ganganath  
Jha Research Institute, Allahabad.

on one who has the grace of Him whose crest jewel is the tender digit of the moon.

Appayya Dikshitar passed his last days at Chidambaram. In his last moments he composed a verse and a half in praise of the Dancer in the golden hall thus: "I am anxious to see my Lord's place. There flashes in my heart the rising sun of the light of the lotus feet of the Dancer of the golden hall" and attained *sayujyamukti* while uttering this verse. One could wish for no more fitting finale to such a great life.

Atmarpana Stuti of the Dikshitar is in fifty slokas in Sanskrit. It is a stotra *par excellence*. It is classic in style and is and should be used daily as a *parayana*-work of daily unintermittent study. The author has done a great service to the cause of Hinduism by this excellent publication whose get-up is as attractive as the contents. I give a summary of the poem but the reader must taste and enjoy for himself the melodious flow of the original in Sanskrit with the expressive meaning conveyed in Tamil by the translator in the word-for-word meaning and the more elaborate explanations.

*Summary of the poem.* The figures attached denote the number of the verses in the original poem.

Who cannot understand that there is a God by looking at the beauty and mystery of creation around him? And He is attainable by Bhakti. This is the foundation of all

philosophy. The world cannot exist without a cause. Nature inanimate is not its cause. Hence O Siva, you alone are the cause of the world's origin, existence and destruction. (2) Oh, Siva ! you alone are known by various names as Indra, Brahma, Vishnu and you alone are expounded in all the Vedas (3) you are the ocean of joy. You are with Sakti in Kailas worshipped always by the *ganas* (4). The Upanishads proclaim thy greatness. Some worship you by yogas and sacrifices as ordained in the Karma Kanda and yet others try to reach you by the yoga methods (5). Alas me ! I have left all these paths. I am immersed in the dreadful ocean of Samsara (6). My senses drag me far away from your feet. I have been a sinner. My life has been a waste (7). I know that thou are to be attained by worship. I still sink in the depths of Samsara (8). My senses drag me far away as an unruly bull leads away its master (9). Feeling the torments of birth and death what shall I do ? I have no way but to seek Thy feet as my only refuge (10). But am I fit to come near you ? I have no *achara*. There is no difference between me and animals. I am a confirmed sinner. Hence your grace alone can make me cross the ocean of misery (11). Hence I am dumb and how can I address thee again to pardon me ? (12). Remembering you when my life parts away from the body will make me reach thee. But how shall I remember thee in my last moments ? (13). How at that moment could my senses lead me aright amidst the wailing of relatives ? (14) ? Therefore now alone I offer my soul *atma* as a sacrifice *arpana* to thee. I know

not anything but to give myself to you as a suppliant. You are the Creator of Brahma, the Maker of all the three worlds. Oh Lord of Parvathi, Thee I beseech for protection. But I am like an animal. No. You will lead me, make me do the right thing and bestow on me wisdom for my final release (15). You are the Guru to Brahma and hence I seek Thee as my final Guru for true knowledge (16) You have tied me with ropes. I pray, break asunder the bonds, make me do Dharma, grant me wisdom and kindly accept me (17). You are the imparter of the *Taraka mantra* which destroys samsara. Thus you grant us knowledge you are the Vidya Guru and I prostrate at Thy feet (18). You are the only physician for curing the disease of Samsara. You will bestow the medicine of Atma jnana knowledge of Self (19). I am a destitute and I seek Thy refuge. What more need I say ? (20). The gods are praising thee for fulfilment of their desires. Compared with them I am only a worm seeking Thy grace (21). I am sinking in the dark abyss of Samzara, You alone should extend Thy hands and lift me up (22). You are the Dakshinamurthy and that face will save me (23). You are the Lord, bondage and salvation. I am enveloped in the burning Samsara. I seek Thee and hence save me. (24). For destroying my knots of ignorance I pray grant me wisdom (25). To know Thee is the only way to Moksha, deliverance. (26). True knowledge of Thee is not attainable by disputations of the human mind but only by Thy grace (27). I am a sinner. I am engrossed in the temptations of the flesh. Virtue, I know not even

the smell of it. Still I seek Thee and it is just that you should not neglect me (28). If you but not accept me, I am, alas ! undone. If a mother spurns her wayward son, who else will harbour him? (29). Hence it is proper that you should not refuse my surrender (30). You are the ocean of mercy and knowledge. If you but save the poor sinner will you be over-riding your own laws (31). But the path of Bhakti is a well trodden road and I walk therein. (32). What do You gain by enveloping me in sin and making me look like a monkey opening its teeth (33). Have I not even a ray of fortune which will make you accept me? (34). Is it just that you, the protector of Dharma should separate me from you? Kindly make me reunite with Thee (35). If You are not redeeming me from births, I pray that I may have bodies but made of the dust of thy Bhaktas (36). Let me be born even as an insect or tree but in the place hallowed by thy feet (37). In my last dying moments let my mind remember Thy feet (38). Let me not then pay heed to the relations around me or my last agonies (39). I meditate on Thy divine form sitting with Parvati on the royal throne (40). How can I, a wretch, see Thy holy feet? Still Your grace impels me forward (41). You are a Bhikshuka. You live in cemeteries, goblins are around you. But I know Your true *swarupa* as the Lord of all and I shall not leave Thy feet (52). And Thy form all Vedas sing and establish (43). Wherever You may be, let me do service to them who bear Thy sandals on their shoulders (44). There are gods who are praised lavishly. You are the only one

and the highest of them all (55). The Vedas proclaim the same and Vedas are my authority (46). Let me get happiness or misery but let my mind befriend Thy holy feet (47). I serve the lowly for my stomach. I am involved in sin. I am guilty (48). You should excuse all my faults—I seek protection at Thy sacred feet. I have no other refuge and you are the only one (49). I surrender myself to You in word through this song—though not all my heart. Take my word as true and You are the fountain of mercy, protect me, the lowly of the low (50).

The Sanskrit slokas are accompanied with a word for word meaning in Tamil and with elaborate notes full of apt quotations from other works. The book should be in the hands of every Hindu and the slokas should be committed to memory. It is only by works like this that erring mortals are reformed and become the followers of Dharma as enjoined by the Lord. When the devotee truly surrenders himself to the Divine, God becomes the ruling passion of his mind and whatever the devotee does, he does for the Lord. Such a devotee has in him the content of the highest knowledge as well as the merits of the perfect man.

The above work is only one of the 104 works written by Appayya Dikshitar. Appayya Dikshita was learned in all the 4 sastras. Vyakarna is the science of grammar which fixes up the use of correct words. Nyaya deals with the science of thought and makes one reason and argue

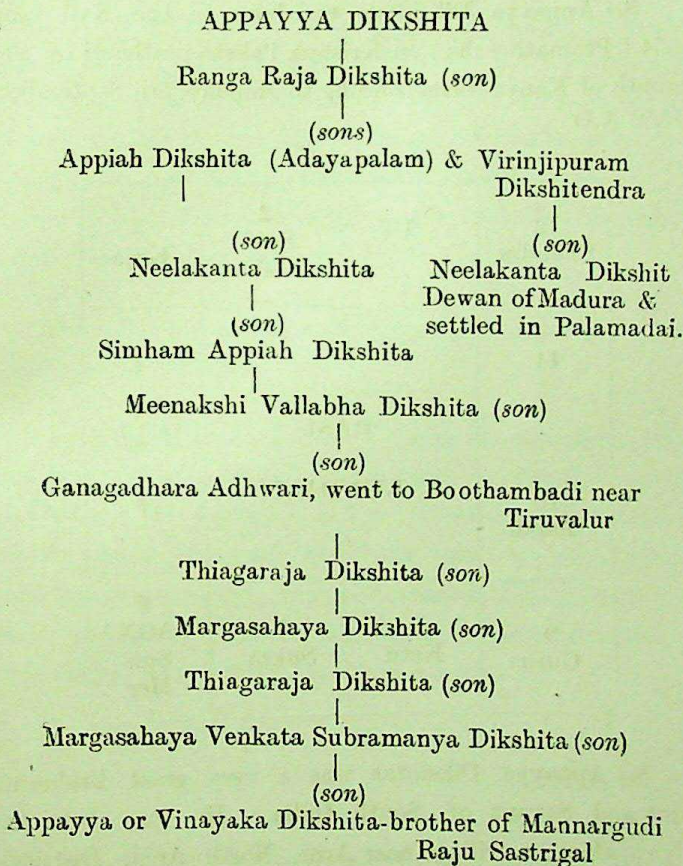
correctly and find out the faults in another's arguments. These two sastras are utilised for finding out the meaning of the words. The Vedas are composed of two parts—the Karmakanda and the Jnanakanda i.e. Upanishads or Vedanta. The science of the interpretation of Vedic texts in the Karmakanda is the Mimamsa Sastra. The science of interpreting the upanishads is the Vedanta Sastra. These are the 5 sastras and the previous three culminate in the 5th the Vedanta of which Adi Sankara has written his immortal Brahma Sutra Bhashya. Appayya Dikshita has written works of outstanding merit and undying recognition in all the 5 sastras and his *magnum opus* is the exposition on Sankara's Brahma Sutra Bhashya called *parimala* and on Srikanta's Visishtadvaita Bhashya called *swarkamani deepika* in which the Bhakti towards Siva is inculcated. Generally the science of dialectics is opposed to the writing of the Kavyas. But in Appayya Dikshita shone the opposites. Equally famous he is as the author of several works in prose, as a commentator on standard kavyas and works on Alankara Sastra, the science of poetics. One may be all these but to be a great Bhakta or devotee in addition is rare. A prophet and a poet is honoured generally after his age. But Appayya Dikshitar had the fortune of being patronised by the chieftain Chinna Bommanna of Vellore.

The Atmarpana Stuti deserves to be read and committed to memory by ordinary mortals like us who are

steeped in materialism and whose minds have to be turned Godward. What our forefathers did every early morning by way of singing stotras in praise of the Lord to the hearing of their children and grand children who would be awakened from sleep and made to sit round them has now to be done by means of publication of books like the one we have now before us.

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## FROM APPAYYA TO RAJU SASTRIGAL



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By Sri M.S. Natarajan. L.M.P.

## SRI APPAYYA DIKSHITAR'S HOROSCOPE

Sri Appayya Dikshitar was born in the Kali year 4654 ( Pramatheecha ) on Krishna Paksha prathamni of the month of Kanya corresponding to Monday, 5th September, 1552 A.D.

12 Chandra	1	2 Sani Rahu	3 Kuja
11	RASI KUNDALI		4
10 Mandi			5
9 Guru	8 Ketu	7 Sukra	6 LAGNA Sun Mer

Sri Appayya Dikshitar was a very great Brahmin Saint and Savant of South India. He was born in Adyappalam, a village near Arni, North Arcot District.

By Sri D.S. Krishna Iyer

He had a profound scholarship in Veda, Vedanta, Nyaya and Mimamsa Sastras and also in Vyakarana and Sanskrit literature. He was a devout follower of Adwaita Philosophy and had unlimited love and devotion to God Siva. He was the author of about 104 sanskrit works relating to religion and poetical literature. His writings stand on a par with Sri Sankara's. In fact, he is believed to be an Avatar of Lord Shiva just as Sri Sankara is believed to be one. He was the chief Pundit in the Courts of Timma Rajah, Chinna-Thimma Rajah and Venkatapathi Rajah (*Telugu Chieftains*).

The following are some of the special features of his horoscope.

1. *CHAMARA YOGA*: Lord of the Ascendent Budha is exalted and in Lagna Kendra and has the aspect of Chandra for Jupiter's house. Results : "The person will be greatly respected by Kings and the aristocracy; good conversationalist, profound scholar and lives more than 70 years"—B. V. Raman's Hindu Predictive Astrology. Every word applies to his life.

2. *KESARI YOGA*: Moon and Jupiter are in quadrant to each other. Prof. B.S. Rao says of this Yoga, "Good life, high education, strong determination to overcome all difficulties which may come in the way on achieving real success, substantial charitable acts and a real benefactor to humanity."

3. *ADHI YOGA*: (Two-thirds of it). Budha in 7th and Sukra in 8th from Moon. "Happy, prosperous, long life and a terror to foes".

4. *VESI YOGA*: Benefic Sukra in the second from the Sun. "Good conversationalist, fluent speaker, wealthy, courageous and extremely charitable".—B.V. Raman.

5. *GURU MANGALA YOGA*: Jupiter and Mars aspect each other giving rise to this Yoga. And Lords of 2 and 4 are powerful in their house. Sri Dikshitar acquired great wealth and distributed the same among his eleven grand-sons.

6. When Lord of fourth is in Swakshetra (own house) and Kendra as in this case, the person born will be perfect in the combination of such advantages as fortune, learning and education and will become a favourite of Kings—Jataka Parijata. Sri R. Lakshmanan says in his article in the 1946 annual number of the Astrological Magazine, "Perfect happiness or bliss would depend upon what is called the Moksha Trikona furnished by the 4th, 8th and 12th houses. A good and strong Jupiter in the fourth house is a great asset in a horoscope. Jupiter in 4th helps worldly life, scholarship and comfort. He makes a man think of the other world because he aspects the eighth conducing to pilgrimage and the 12th house representing the house of Moksha or Salvation.

7. Budha, Lord of first, in first and Sukra Lord of 2nd in second has made him eloquent, a genius in poetry and an author. The strong disposition of the Lords of 1, 2 and 4 has given him the unique learning and controversial supremacy to such an extent as to call him as "one of the most encyclopaedic minds of the work."

8. Saturn in 9, strong religious belief, has made him a philosopher and enabled him to construct and consecrate many temples.

9. Mars in 10th with Digbala, very powerful, has given him, great independence and courage of conviction, control and conquest in controversy. Sri Dikshitar was a great adept in dialectics like Sri Sankara and won over many opponents in religious beliefs to his side.

10. *CHATUSSAGARA YOGA*: Four planets in all the four Kendras from Lagna constitute what is known as Chatussagara Yoga. We find such a combination in this horoscope. As the name of the Yoga indicates, for one having this Yoga his name and fame will extend throughout the four oceans of this world.

Everyone of the Astrological results above delineated correctly tallies with his life. His may be taken as the type of Saint-sage-scholar's horoscope. In the 73rd year he departed from his mortal frame and merged in the Light of Sri Nataraja at the famous shrine of Chidambaram after invoking His Grace in the last couplet of his own.

*(Particulars of horoscope taken from Sri Dikshitar's biography by Pandit K.V. Subrahmanya Sastrigal.)*

## HOROSCOPE OF

**Brihmasri M.M. Raju Sastrigal Of Mannargudi,**

*(By Sri Y. Mahalinga Sastri)*

*Year of Birth:* Yuva (1815 A.D.)  
1737 Salivahana Saka  
4916 Kali Yugadi

*Month:* Vaisakha. (May).

*Day:* Bhanuvara 17th Sunday (28)

*Time:* 19.30 Naligais

*Tilki:* Krishna paksha Panchami

*Nakshatra:* Sravana 60 (Adyantam 66-50)

Years Months Days Naligais Vinadis

*Dasa:* Chandra 6 — 6 — 23 — 47 — 26



## STORY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

### HE KEEPS THE PROMETHEAN FLAME OF CULTURE BURNING BRILLIANTLY

In "*Sivananda, The One World Teacher*", Mr. K.A. Tawker, narrates in a striking and succinct manner the story of the gradual evolution and development of the personality of Sivananda from medical practitioner to Himalayan Yogi depicting the different stages, turns and patterns of personality in a correct yet colourful manner. Though India had once been a land of mystics and metaphysicians, yogis and spiritualistic seers endowed with knowledge of the past, present and future, such spiritualistic personalities could now be counted on one's fingers. The reason is not far to seek. This is the age of Kali. By definition it is an age of decay and destruction. Strong and powerful waves of gross materialism are sure to envelope the world as time advances. In the increasingly decadent age, it must be a matter for gratification that gifted persons like Swami Sivananda who have made a close and systematic study of the theory of Yoga and who have gone through the strenuous programmes of psychophysical practices are doing their best to keep the ancient and promethean flame of ancient culture, spirituality and philosophy burning brilliantly.

*Dr. R.Nagaraja Surma. M.A. Ph.D.,*  
"The Astrological Magazine," Bangalore.

### World's Whitesmith

I have just received His Holiness' snap autographed, seated smiling under a huge tree. It reminds me of the poetry, which I learnt at schools, "The Village Blacksmith". It runs thus: "Under a spreading chestnut tree the village smithy stands." Swami Sivananda is not like the village blacksmith forging horse-shoes but he is the World's Whitesmith with his world-renowned spiritual smithy at Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh. His anvil is spotless paper and his hammer is his illustrious pen which produces sublime sparks of nobility that transform woeful human lives into a future of purity and divinity.

I do fervently pray to Almighty Sivaperumal to grant His Holiness health and long life so that individuals like me may be given divine guidance and illumination from His Holiness' vast repository of spiritual knowledge.

—*M. Natrajah Mudaliar,*  
Durban, Natal.

### Veritable Spiritual Dynamo SAYS AN AMERICAN

Last week I had the pleasure of calling at the Ramakrishna Mission, Port Louis Branch, when accidentally my eyes fell on a copy of "Divine Life". With the kind permission of the Minister-in charge of the Mission I took the copy and started reading it from cover to cover. The more I read, the more my enthusiasm increased.

One friend of mine who leads a pious religious life told

me the other day that Swamiji is a veritable spiritual dynamo in this world of ups and downs. It is in fact very hard to come across a man who espouses the cause of spiritual work and undertakes such a heavy responsibility, as Swamiji is doing.

—*Meeranaidoo Somanah*,  
Port Louis, America.

### Ancient Hindu Thought

*Concentration and Meditation :*

*Easy steps to Yoga :*

*Brahma Sutras. Part II :*

Swami Sivananda is a prolific author of books on Hindu thought and philosophy. Credit is due to him for having popularised so much ancient thought and philosophy, particularly to the foreign reader. Many of his books attain lucidity and all are animated with genuine enthusiasm.

“Meditation”, says Swami Sivananda, “is the only way to attaining immortality and bliss.” He asserts that the avenues of intuition knowledge are opened by this process alone. Concentration and meditation are just paths to self-realization. Addressing himself to the *Yogis* and the *Bhaktas*, the author of *Concentration and Meditation* prepares the aspirant for attaining these virtues by first purging the mind through right conduct. Rightly he warns the reader to arm himself with a preliminary training in ethics and a life of celibacy. Concentration begins first with abstraction, then one has to absorb oneself with

minor recurrent sounds, and then concern oneself exclusively with a concrete object. Mental vision and meditation are rendered easy there-after. The theory and practice of concentration have been elaborately described for the benefit of the reader.

The bulk of this work is concerned with the preliminaries, the practice and with various types of meditation. The author acquaints the reader with the obstacles, physical, mental and moral, that beset the path of meditation, through nearly one hundred pages. Perhaps the most delectable experiences in meditation are of a mystical nature-of inner illumination, of cosmic consciousness and ultimately of those unmistakable flashes of self-realization. Clarity and abundance of homely illustrations render a work of abstract nature comprehensible to the layman.

While the cult of Yoga has been lately attracting wide attention and keen interest in both the East and the West, and considerable literature on the subject has flooded the market, there is still room for an authentic work. Few realise that *Yoga* is an exact science aiming at the harmonious development of the human body in the first instance, then of the mind and finally of the soul. Approaching *Yoga* with humility and simplicity, one may hope to profit much. Swami Sivananda shows that peace and happiness reside within us and hence we must look within us to seek them. Even for sheer physical well-being, *Yoga* is of immense usefulness. *Yoga* alone can

show how both body and spirit can live in harmony. But the Sadhak must have, we are warned, the right mental attitude of discipline and pure living. The senses have to be held in restraint, the mind is to be conquered. Silence and meditation, again, are of paramount importance. Before giving instruction in eight Yogic Asanas, the author gives special lessons to the aspirant. At this stage the Sadhak is left to daily practice and perseverance. The hints are clear and the Asanas are properly illustrated.

The aphorisms of Badarayana expounding the nature and character of the Brahman, showing the ways of attainment and enlightenment, are familiar to the student of Hindu philosophy. From time to time, Sankara, Ramanuja and others wrote commentaries on them and study of these *Sutras* had thus become almost forbidding, the literature grown around them being stupendous. Scholars alone could therefore draw benefit from their study. Swami Sivananda has made an attempt to render all this wisdom accessible to the general reader. The first part, already published separately, provides a commentary of the first two chapters of the Brahma Sutras in simple language, discussing each chapter separately in the form of an introduction. The second part of these *Sutras*, now, available, continues in the same manner the commentary of the Sutras of III and IV chapters with introduction and synopsis. The Student of these verses will be grateful to the commentator for his labours.

*"The Hindustan Times"*

New Delhi.

**Peace And Purity Prevail There***SAYS THE GENERAL*

The peaceful and pure atmosphere that prevails at Sivananda Ashram was so marked. I was so struck with the quietness and the orderliness with which people went about in Swamiji's Ashram. I am sorry my visit there was so rushed, but I had to get back early to Delhi.

—General K.M. Carriappa,  
New Delhi.

**Rishikesh Comes into Great prominence**

Swami Sivananda is a Vibhuti. Rishikesh was not known to many people previously. Now the whole world knows about Rishikesh. This is due to Sivananda's influence and dissemination of spiritual knowledge throughout the world.

—Swami Chaitanya Giri,  
Kailash Ashram,  
Rishikesh.

**Brings Light To The Hearts**

Swami Sivananda's name has been referred to me as one deeply interested in the welfare of humanity and the bringing of the Light into the Hearts and Consciousness of all Mankind.

For this reason, I despatched a copy of the Dawn Prayer, which has been sent to thousands all over the world, and which has met with a tremendous response. We, who are working to distribute this message already, strongly feel the Power for Good as a result.

—Mrs. Cynthia D. Halpern,  
Laguna Beach,  
California, U.S.A.

### His Personality Surprises A Noble Italian

I have very much appreciated the dedications written on the books of H. H. Swami Sivananda, and more is my appreciation for His teaching and His great fervour in explaining Yoga in so friendly and comprehensive a manner. Since 1939 I have been reading Swami Sivananda's book "Yoga Asanas". I have read it scores of times, during the war years, when all communications with India were out. I was favourably surprised of the personality of the Author the book revealed.

Now, I am very glad to know that Swami Sivananda's Ashram is a living centre of wisdom, peace and brotherhood; and I send to it my best wishes to greatly progress towards the highest ideals preached by the Great Swami.

—Rag. Sorgic Litardi,  
Empoli, ITALY.

### The Best of the Ancient and Modern Techniques to Get Sound Sleep

*How to Get Sound Sleep:* (pages 168—price 2/8)  
Swamiji's name is well-known throughout India and even beyond. He has written a large number of books and the present one is a valuable addition. In this, Swamiji discusses the various aspects of sleep—the physiological, philosophical and spiritual. One great beauty of the book is that it contains aids to sound sleep not only from the ancient religious psychological point of view but from the modern medical point of view also. Swamiji has recommended a number of recipes—Ayurvedic, Allopathic as

well as Homeopathic. This book would be found useful not only to laymen but to doctors also, particularly to those who rely on the nature-cure system. It is interesting to find quotations from Yoga Sutras interspersed with modern medical directions, e.g., taking Huxley's Nervigour Syrup or Sanatogen. There are practical suggestions also such as mustard foot-bath, sleeping on the left side (i.e., facing south if the head is towards the east). In the end of the book are given texts of a number of gramophone records which contain songs of Prem, Ramayan, Nam Kirtan, etc., etc. Swami Sivanandaji has been able to give the best of the ancient and the modern techniques to get sound sleep because he is a great Yogi himself and had been a doctor before taking Sanyas. Naturally he has drawn upon the wisdom of his deep learning and long experience. We strongly recommend the book to our readers.

—“*Indian States*”  
Delhi.

*Health and Long Life*: It is good to see philosophy and practicality go hand in hand. This book contains a very lengthy treatise on dietetics and self-discipline which will be of value to all students. Particularly welcome is the section dealing with Homeopathy, and other sects would do well to give this method of curative medicine based on Hermetic principle, their attention.

—S.H., “*The Aqudrian Path*”  
London.

I was an Assistant Surgeon in the Government Hospital, Chidambaram. Then I resigned the post and

opened a Maternity Nursing Home. I had very good practice. I have a pious devoted wife. I moved in all sorts of cars, I had all the pleasures and all the luxuries, and yet I had no peace of mind.

I purchased a few spiritual books of Sri Swami Sivananda from Higginbotham's Stalls one by one and studied them carefully. They were impressive, inspiring and practical.

I met Swamiji at Madras and Chidambaram during his All-India Tour. *His speeches transformed me.* They inspired and elevated me. I accompanied him as far as Colombo. I made up my mind to leave my practice and stay with Swamiji for attaining peace.

I am the Medical Officer of the Sivananda Charitable Hospital. I am now Swamiji's personal physician. He gives me practical spiritual instructions.

I am doing Japa of Panchakshara. I am practising meditation. Swamiji's company is a blessing to me. I am daily improving in my Sadhana. I have found out my Peace now.

—*Dr. K.C Roy, M.B.B.S.,*  
Ananda Kutir P.O.

I am deeply grateful to Swamiji for providing me with so profuse nourishment of spiritual life. His books and journals have been a source of illumination and of great comfort to me. They reveal illimitable horizons of the spiritual life of man.

—*Dr. N.N. Gangulee,*  
London.

Some Sannyasins are greatly attached to their disciples, but Swami Sivananda has no attachment to his disciples though he has innumerable of them.

There are many able Sannyasins and yet they do not succeed in their attempts But Sivananda has succeeded in all his undertakings. This is due to God's grace.

—*H.H. Swami Tapovanam*  
Uttarkashi,  
Himalayas.

*Brahma Sutras, Part I:*

Sri Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh is so well known to the readers of religious literature that he hardly needs any introduction from a reviewer. His writings have run into several editions and have been translated into several languages; and his activities have shaped themselves into a powerful movement for spiritual regeneration. He is a prolific writer, an untiring worker in the noble cause of our religion and culture.

Besides Swami Vireswarananda's annotated work on the Brahma Sutras published by the Ramakrishna Mission, there is perhaps no other work extant. Hence the book under review is a welcome publication to the students of Vedanta having only a slight knowledge of Sanskrit. This part contains the first two chapters, comprising 291 of the aphorisms of the immortal Badarayana. The Sutras are serially numbered, and each Sutra given in Devanagari characters is followed by a translation, word-

for-word meaning and a free rendering. Each section begins with a brief summary and a synopsis. A glossary of important topics discussed in the Sutras is appended. All the Sutras, moreover, are given together at the outset of this laborious work, for the sake of Swadhyaya. There is also a long general introduction dealing with various commentaries on the aphorisms. Swami Sivananda explains every Sutra in the light of Sankara's celebrated commentary. His explanation is simple, neither too short nor too long. Apt quotations from the Upanishads have enriched the explanation.

*Swami Jagadiswarananda,*  
"HUMAN AFFAIRS", Udupi.

*"The Divine Life — Forest University weekly"*  
Vol. I: This weekly under notice is devoted entirely to discussion of age-old spiritual factors and processes that have enriched Hindu civilisation and religion. The Mission under the name of Yoga-Vedanta Forest University undertakes to coach up spiritual aspirants under able guidance, and the University weekly remains a necessary adjunct and medium of instruction. The Volume I of the series presents a varied fare of spiritual talks and themes useful and interesting to all who care to go through its pages.

*"The Hindu",*  
Madras.

**One Long Annotin of Gita**

*Siva, The Prophet of New Age*: by Rai Sahab. A.B.N.Sinha: It is not so much a biography that we have as a study of the mission personality of Swami Sivananda. The Swami has done splendid work in the cause of Hinduism and humanity for several years past. The Swami has indeed, as the author states, led such a life that could well said to be one long annotation of Gita or the Brahmasutras.

“*Diwan Chand Review*”,  
New Delhi.

**A Zest to Life**

The more I see Swamiji's books the more I want to prolong my life to study them.

Along with the works of Srimad Appayya Dikshita, Swamiji's writings shall with God's grace lead me to light. If I devote my life to a deep and reverent study of them, I should consider that I have not lived in vain.

*Y. Mahalinga Sastri, M.A.B L.,*  
Tiruvalangadu.

**Widens Horizons**

I have just finished reading Swami Sivananda's book, “*Brahma Sutras*”. It is one of the finest books I have encountered. It has answered so many questions that have been in my mind for a year. I cannot attempt to put into words how Swamiji's book has widened my horizons. I would like to read more and again and again.

—*Miss Esther Scheintthuah,*  
Visciscis, U.S.A.

Through the grace of Swamiji Maharaj alone can this mind be ever controlled. In future, service to Guru Deva's lotus feet, spreading His nectarine-like teachings and trying to realise him shall be my highest Sadhana and Yoga. At every step I have to depend on him. I want to become his ideal disciple. He shall be my goal. May he purify me and make me get attached intensely to his feet. Let my devotion to his feet be steady and unflinching. What he has done for me cannot be repaid in millions of births.

—*V. Srinivasan*,  
Durban, Africa.

Swami Sivananada is doing wonderful work by the grace of God, in his beautiful ashram, at the very foot of the Himalayas—the roof of the world. My heart surges with delight when I think of him. May he continue his good work and may his blessings reach thousands of souls for God's vision!

—*M.K. Spencer*,  
Author, KARACHI.

I have studied Sri Swamiji's book "Raja Yoga" with his translation of the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali, and I must say, it is the very best book one can find in the line of Yoga. His rendering of the Sutras is one of the best I have seen, it is very clear and simple, but at the same time it also reveals the deepest and most secret meaning of the Sutras.

Swamiji's commentary is very good and is explained in such simple words that any one can understand it.

By arranging the sutras in this new order, he has made it much easier to understand them and practically follow the teachings. As the book is written as a practical course, I am quite sure that it will be very much appreciated here in the West, and it will serve as a real Guru for us in our Yoga practices.

—*Bertil Nadell*,  
Stockholm.

I plunged into the reading of Sri Swamiji's remarkable works. Although I have not yet finished, I have already read sufficient to realise the great value of Swamiji's teachings. Consequently I will make them known to the members of this Institute, of which I am President. I have the great privilege of receiving his communications which breathe so much happiness and peace for mankind. May God continue to bless his untiring efforts for us.

—*W.B.Crow, D.Sc. Ph.D.*,  
President, Institute of Cosmic Studies,  
Wester Park, Leicester.

#### A Practical Guide

*Easy Steps to Yoga:* This is a practical guide to Yoga. Because Yoga needs for its success a mind both pure and strong, and well subdued to the purpose of Yoga, the holy author gives ample instructions on the methods for these ends particularly on Brahmacharya, Right Conduct and Mind-Control. After these come the chapters

on Vedanta and Meditation, which are the chief means of attaining the goal. At the end is a chapter on Yogic Asanas, which are an aid to the aspirant; the book is of incalculable value for earnest followers.

—“*The Life Natural*”,  
Pudukkottai.

### Human Mind

*Mind, Its Mysteries And Control, Parts I and II:* Swami Sivananda's two volumes of psychology attempting to probe into mind's mysteries and even inscrutable regions offer in the author's words “A Master key to inner power”. Fittingly has the book been dedicated to the memory of the author of *Yoga-Sutras*, Maharishi Patanjali. The happiness of the inner being is invisible and untraceable unless by its varied manifestation. The restlessness of the mind, on the other hand, is the deadly canker at the very roots of the life-tree. The author strives to show what mind is and what it unfolds within its uncharted depths. As usual, Swami Sivananda has assiduously explored the Sanskrit lore for the solution of all these problems and mad cravings that linger in the human mind. In terms of Yoga and Sadhana he offers a panacea for all these ailments. The book is well-written, documented with ancient sayings in support of the author's argument...an able treatment of an absorbing theme.

—“*The Hindustan Times*”  
New Delhi.

### The Great Powers And Benignant Care

On many occasions, I had been assailed by doubts on my road to God-realization. No sooner did I make up my mind to communicate them to Sri Swamiji so that they might be resolved, than a satisfactory solution occurred to my mind. This I cannot but ascribe to the great powers and benignant care of Sri Swamiji. Amidst all doubts and prickly environment, Sri Swamiji's face that wreaths in perennial smiles, is my only solace.

Sri Swamiji's 'Kailas' Prasad sent to me has wrought a miracle with me, for, it gave me a new lease of life when I was laid up with high fever, after my return to this place. Its glory and healing powers are indescribable.

—*Mokshapriya, B.A.,*  
Malangur, Hyderabad State.

### More Busy Than A Prime Minister

Swami Sivananda is a tremendous worker. How he gets on with so many departments of work is indeed a wonder. His service unto the world at large is real and great. I would at once vote for him, to the Prime Minister's place in our Free India, because in days gone by there were only Saints and Sages who were ministers.

—*Swami Rajeswarananda,*  
Upanishad Vihar, Kalahasti.

In this book, "Women's Light and Guide" edited by Mrs. Liliane Shamash, homages from the foremost among

the women disciples of Swamiji, including women of all countries, are found. Liliane Shamash herself was born in Manchester. The book is possibly one of the finest productions of the Sivananda Publication League, beautifully illustrated, with contributions from a great variety of women devotees and a very large number of photographs. From the point of view of the General Welfare Movement, the whole work represents a striking and powerful contribution to the universal work of human uplift. It sets a standard for women throughout the breaking down of a world-wide system of false values, and the establishment of selfless service and self-realization. The great love which holds the universe should hold mankind. Woman as the agent of creation, is blessed with the instinct of Mother-love which should become the standard of human association. "Women's Light and Guide" serves to confirm our view that Women should take their rightful place in world affairs and help to lead the human race along the road to the Divine Life.

—*Bert Taylor,*  
"General Welfare Movement",  
England.

#### **His Books Wield Convincing Power Over Agnostics**

Swami Sivananda's works "All About Hinduism" and "Lord Siva and His Worship", with other books of his, will be a great help to us while propagating Sanatana Dharma. Specially where young men put forth their

doubts before us, Swamiji's books help us much in convincing them about the real significance of the principles of our Sanatana Dharma, the Eternal Religion.

It is always the case that young men think our rituals as meaningless. We find it most helpful to convince them while referring to Swamiji's books. We cannot estimate the great work His Holiness has been doing in publishing books on all subjects not only spiritual but also temporal such as medicine, education, health, etc.

We pray Sri Gopal Krishna, our Govardhan Mutt presiding Deity, to grant Swami Sivananda hundred and twenty years in full blooming health and enable him to make his Forest University a successful adventure.

—Swami Yogeshwarananda Teerthaji,  
Shri Govardhan Mutt, Puri,  
Camp Bangalore.

### **Is He The Indicated Master To Help The Seekers ?**

Swami Sivananda's book on meditation, "Concentration and Meditation" French Translation by Sri Jean Herbert, is one of the best of our collection and is very much appreciated by the French public.

Since I have a house here in the hills in India many friends from the West are writing and coming with requests. I am sending to Swamiji this letter which appears to me to be for him. I am writing to D. Finch telling him that I am sending his letter to Swamiji. Is Swamiji not the indicated master to help that Seeker of Truth ?

It is needless to say that I shall enjoy to visit His Holiness' Ashram the next time I go to the plains. All books of Swamiji are in our library for the use of the pilgrims coming from the West in quest of real peace.

—*Mrs. Jean Herbert (of Geneva),*  
Haimavati, Almora.

#### **The Effect Of Swamiji's Visit To Ceylon Is Lasting**

I am glad to say that since Swamiji's visit to Ceylon, many people have started to do Sadhana, Sat-sang and hold congregational prayers and in particular I feel a great change in me after my Gurudev's darshan and visit.

—*Srimati Sivanandam Tamayah,*  
Colombo.

#### **Motherly Love And Fatherly Guidance**

I must say that during my stay at the Ashram I was ever so happy with Swami Sivananda's motherly love and fatherly guidance. I came here empty of heart but I am going in fullness of love and light, with which I intend to live.

I shall treasure the remembrance of the days passed in Sivananda Ashram and in hours of doubt and difficulties will look towards His Holiness for guidance and blessings.

—*Chandra Sen, B.A.L.L.B.,*  
Solicitor; Bombay.

### Irresistible Personality

No more can I resist Swami Sivananda's radiant personality; I did it too long, now!, no more! Humbled, I want devotion to Swamiji's lotus feet. I want to prostrate before him and beg of him, the most Holy Sire, and beg of him; I don't know what, because I cannot resist his overwhelming personality, as I did too long, too long; I want to sit by his blessed feet and sing my song of joy.

—*Mr. Gunnar Lauridsen*  
Copenhagen.

### Read And Re-Read

Swamiji's book "Brahma Sutras" Part I, would be read and re-read by me and with the blessings of His Holiness I should get the wisdom to understand aright our Acharya Bhashya on the same.

I have read three biographies of His Holiness written by three best men from different angles and they all contribute to the best understanding of the entire composite personality.

I trust that with His Holiness' blessings the Ganganatha Jha Research Institute will flourish well.

—*A.S. Nataraja Ayyar, M.A.M.L.,*  
Curator,  
The Ganganatha Jha Research Institute;  
Allahabad.

**Pour Out The Hidden Wisdom**

Swamiji is nearer to me in thought and love than he may know. I wish many happy returns of his birthday and I breathe out an aspiration that his life may pour out to many, the living waters of the Hidden Wisdom of Saints and Sages of India! This Wisdom shines in simplicity and abides detached from external success and glory. Enshrined deep down in India's heart is that true Freedom—the Freedom of the Spirit—which is greater than there is among the enlightened peoples of the world. To that true Freedom which points to Faith as lying at the fountain of true civilisation and every right path in history, may Swamiji's work bear ever-increasing witness in this period of complexity and chaos! I believe when India becomes again a truly spiritual Nation, she will inaugurate a new Cycle of History.

—*Sadhu T. L. Vaswani,*  
Pandey Cottage,  
Poona.

## ON SIVANANDA LITERATURE

### *HEALTH AND LONG LIFE :*

The second revised and enlarged edition of Swami Sivananda's most practical work on "Health and Long life" which is now under review contains a considerable lot of information which if translated into daily practice would definitely ensure freedom from diseases, and longevity. There are 17 chapters and each is full of practical hints for the preservation of health and maintenance of the body in efficient working order. I would like to invite the attention of your readers to the 7th chapter in which 37 varieties of baths are described for the effective cleaning or cleansing the body:- hot, cold, salt baths and so forth. Cleaning of the body would be of no good unless the mind also is simultaneously cleaned and purified. Important yogic exercises for the purification of the mind are prescribed in the 12th chapter. Reference is also made to Sun-cure, Kaya-kalpa and other forms of treatment such as homeopathy.

Swami Sivananda believes (rightly one would suppose) that in the modern days of penicillin and streptomycin every complaint is sought to be treated by means of a large number of injections of drugs into the system. These injections, no doubt, may give some relief, but, they are harmful as foreign matter is being injected into the

system. Swamiji counsels nature-cure as far as possible. Man is a creature of nature and his lot has been cast amidst the surroundings of nature. His life has to be attuned to the forces of nature in harmony with which life has to be lived. Well regulated program of exercises, balanced diet, use of milk, fruits and vegetables in right proportions, meditations, prayer, rest, relaxation, and above all freedom from evil thoughts intentions would certainly bring about a healthy condition of the nervous system and guarantee longevity. Over-eating, Swamiji points out, is the direct cause of a number of ailments.

Recently Sri Purushottamdas Tandon advised people to give up, milk, salt, sugar and many other articles and counselled mankind to try eating uncooked food. One may experiment with anything including God, Religion, and spirituality, but experiments with diet are dangerous. There is a popular saying that life is prolonged by intake of milk, and intellect is sharpened by taking ghee, (Ghritena vardhatebu ddhih ksheerena ayuh pravardhate)

Aayurveda and Yoga set great store by milk. It is indeed difficult to get pure milk from a pure and properly brought up cow. If that could be had, it is verily nectarine food. Of the one hundred and odd volumes written by Swami Sivananda, I am sure the present one is bound to be as helpful as a family-doctor. It is at once a work on yoga, on aayurvoda, on dietics, on spirituality and higher life. I am sure it would be widely read by the public with profit and instruction.

—*Dr.R.Nagaraja Sarma, M.A.Ph.D.,*  
*"Astrological Magazine",*  
 Bangalore.

### Young Dust

A journalist and a philosopher (23 years old) Mr. P.A. Viswanath addresses 101 (one hundred and one) question to Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh and the questions covering every topic and subject matter under the sun ranging between civics and cinema on the one hand, and philosophy and prostitution on the other, have been published in the form of a pamphlet, here noticed, along with their answers, for the edification and illumination of all interested in the problems of life here and destiny hereafter. In the course of a brief "foreward," Sri C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer has paid a tribute to Mr. Viswanath and to Swamiji, and the Ex-Diwan of Travancore hopes that the questions and answers assembled in the pamphlet would be found useful by those who have to adjust themselves to the conditions of the modern world.

What is Marriage? What is life? What is the quintessence of the Gita? What is philosophy? These are some of the sample questions raised and answered, in this pamphlet. The catechetical method has a distinct advantage over others and I have no doubt that the questions of life and death here presented along with brief, convincing answers would be deeply pondered by laymen and philosophers, students and specialists. The pamphlet is a welcome addition to philosophical literature.

:—*Dr. R. Nagaraja Sarma, M.A.Ph.D.,*  
*"Astrological Magazine,"*

Bangalore.

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—Sri Somnath Dhar, M.A.,  
New Delhi.

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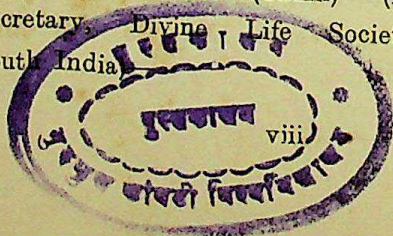
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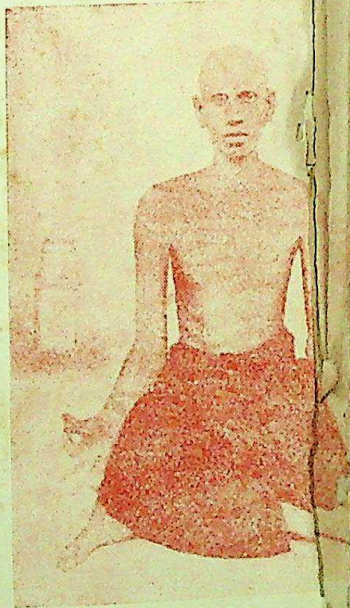
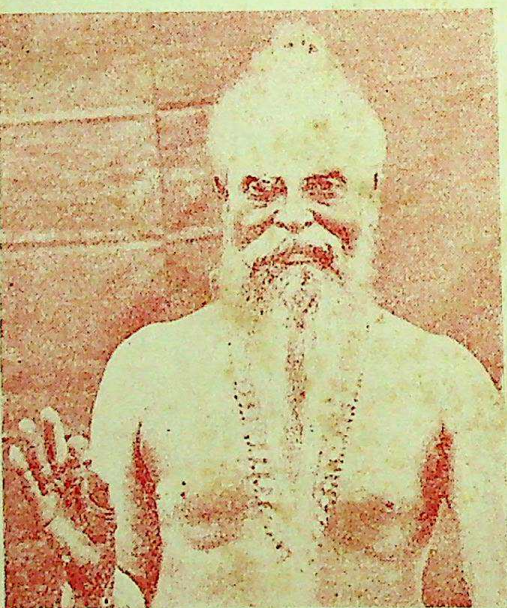
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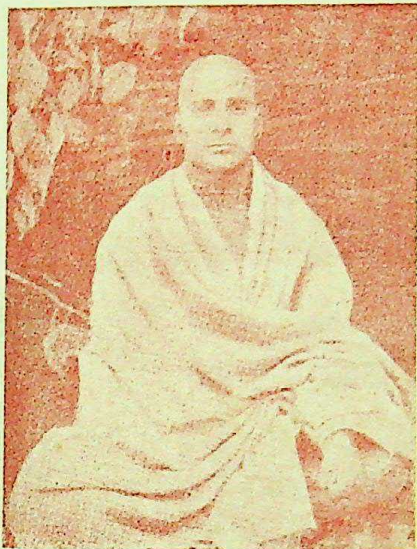


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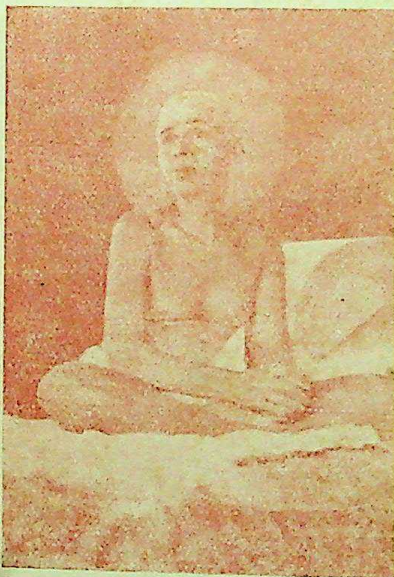


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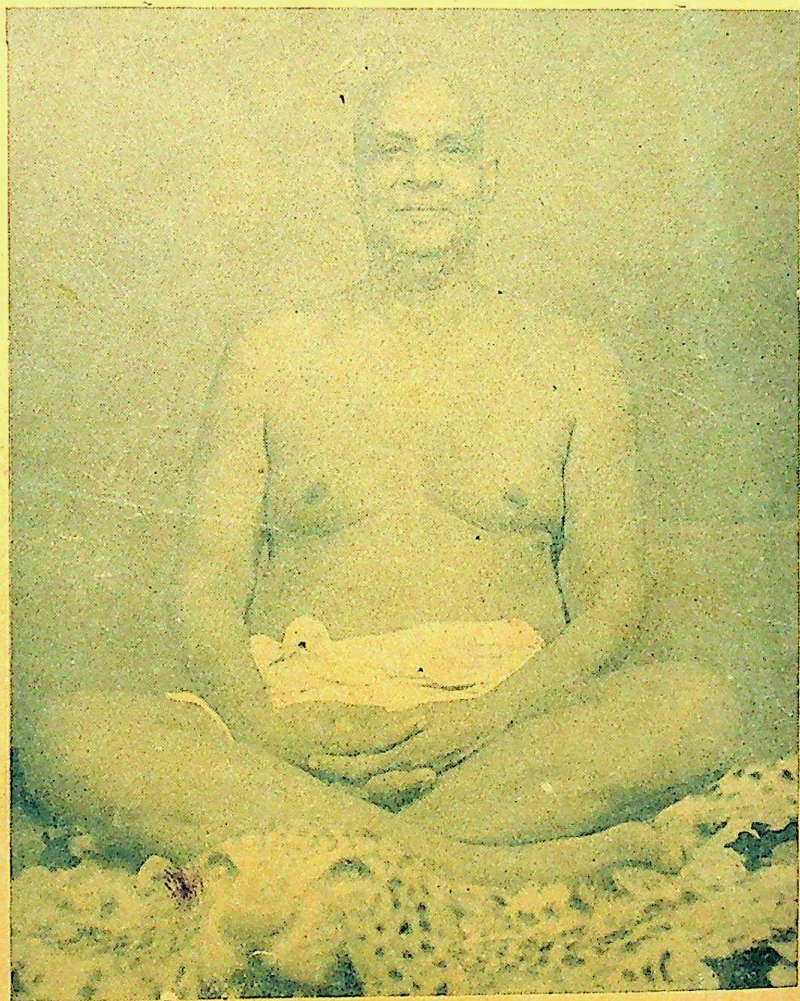


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